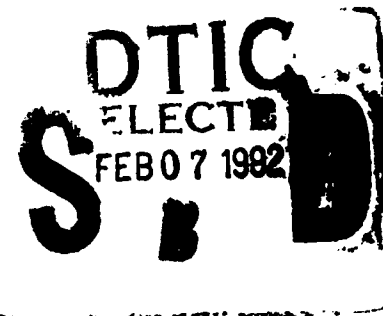


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NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

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## THESIS

INDIA AND THE PERSIAN GULF CRISIS: FROM GLOBAL  
IDEALISM TO REGIONAL REALITIES

by

Tito Prem Dua

June, 1991

Thesis Advisor:

R. H. Magnus

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**India and the Persian Gulf Crisis:  
From Global Idealism to Regional Realities**

by

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**Submitted in partial fulfillment  
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## ABSTRACT

India has for decades professed a desire to participate in the international system as a global power. However, India's surprisingly equivocal reaction to the 1990 Gulf Crisis and subsequent military conflict did not reflect these aspirations. This thesis examines Indian foreign policy focussing on (a) changing Indian regional concerns, (b) factors which have prevented India from achieving predominance in South Asia, and (c) India's reactions to the Gulf War.

This analysis indicates an apparent shift in Indian priorities from global aspirations to regional and domestic issues. The thesis suggests a careful review of a seeming U.S. "tilt" towards India--despite what appears to be a change in India's policies towards improving relations in South Asia and deteriorating U.S.-Pakistan relations--given India's past willingness to exercise both military and economic force in South Asia to achieve her goals.



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## I. INTRODUCTION

In international politics, nations are judged both by what they say and, more importantly, by what they do. Since its independence, Indian political leaders have professed a desire to fill the power vacuum created by the British withdrawal from the subcontinent and eventually from the Indian Ocean. In support of these goals set by India's leaders, she has built her military infrastructure into one of the world's largest.

Despite India's desires, she has been prevented from increasing her role in the Indian Ocean by events and factors beyond her capacity to control. Additionally, problems at home and in the South Asian region have forced her to pay more attention to local issues vice international affairs.

India's reactions to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and subsequent military conflict have been criticized as not in keeping with her desires to participate in greater Indian Ocean affairs. This crisis provided her with a unique opportunity to develop her desires as an Indian Ocean power with vital interests in the Gulf region. However, her equivocal statements regarding the invasion and non-military role have left her isolated from affairs in the Middle East.

This thesis will examine India's role in the Indian Ocean and how her desires to take a more active role have been prevented. It will look at India's reaction to the Gulf crisis and attempt to identify reasons for her responses. The underlying theme of this paper is that India's

inability to legitimately control affairs in South Asia--a legitimacy based upon acceptance and compliance from other regional nations--has forced her to set aside greater Indian Ocean aspirations to first solidify her South Asian position.

While successive governments over the past four decades have gradually looked inward, India has continued to present an image to the world which placed international issues over regional problems. India's response to the Gulf crisis--though not a fundamental change in Indian foreign policy--is an overt demonstration that Indian concerns for the near future are to gain its leadership role in South Asia prior to any major involvement in affairs outside the region.

It is vital for the U.S. to examine carefully its apparent tilt towards India--in light of India's Gulf positions and past willingness to exert influence in South Asia. It is critical that U.S. policies keep from enhancing India's hegemonic tendencies and, hence, the U.S. being viewed as a partner to India's strive for regional predominance, at the expense of other nations in the region.



## II. INDIA AND THE INDIAN OCEAN LITTORAL

The importance of regional superpowers, and the roles that they play both regionally and globally, is likely to increase as competition for influence between the United States and the Soviet Union declines. Increasing as well will be the international concern regarding the military capabilities of these regional actors and their willingness to flex their muscle within their respective regions and beyond.

India is a regional power with both the capability and the desire to project influence throughout the Indian Ocean. Since its independence in 1947 from British rule, "India has seen itself as one of the four Superpowers along with the United States, the Soviet Union, and China." [Ref 1:p.77] While the reality of this perception has eluded the Indians, it has driven them as a nation to reach for their envisioned position in the world order.

India's history of repeated invasions and the struggle for independence from the British "reinforced the belief that the loss of independence--while continuously possible--must never again be permitted." [Ref 2:p.148] This has been evidenced throughout the years since independence by an India unwilling to participate in alliances and coalitions, unless directly serving her national interests, and much concern over any perceived threats to her independent actions on international affairs. For, "India's belief that its independence is continually threatened in a variety of ways, economic and political, is

only matched by a fierce determination to prevent its loss, whatever the costs." [Ref 2:p.148]

India's foreign policy since 1947 has been based upon the "establishment of India's predominance in South Asia--a predominance whose legitimacy would be accepted by other nations in the region." [Ref 3:p.109] Accomplishment of this goal has been difficult for the Indians. The other six nations in South Asia, for fear of having their actions pressured by a powerful India, have attempted to create military and political linkages with nations outside of South Asia. This has been made easier by the competition for influence between the two Superpowers and their willingness to exchange weapons and financial aid for access to strategic positions, vis a vis each other, or even sometimes for stated support of respective ideological beliefs. Realizing this has led the Indians to concentrate on removing the presence of foreign forces in the region thus leaving regional nations with little choice but to accede to India's role in South Asia. Good relations with the Soviets and limited strategic interest in South Asia for the U.S.--with the possible exception of Pakistan--combined with the end of the cold war will make this easier for India.

It is necessary to qualify the statement regarding India's foreign policy, for though it implies a desire to establish her position in South Asia, her leaders--specifically Nehru--had greater global aspirations for India. While the leaders who followed Nehru spoke of these same intentions, they were increasingly forced to pay closer attention to regional affairs. This will be discussed later in the thesis, but it is necessary to understand for India's initial aspirations to play a global

role have also been a factor preventing her from increasing her regional status.

An integral part of any recognized power is the presence of strong and capable military forces. For many years, India has maintained a powerful army and a rapidly developing air force, while its naval forces have been ignored due to an inability to identify a sea-borne threat. Though the desire for a strong navy that would show the importance of India to the world has always been in the forefront of the minds of the Indian elite, "this type of Naval expansion was beyond the country's immediate resources and needs." [Ref 4:p.202] However, "the 1971 Indo-Pakistan war, demonstrating the potential of missile armed fast patrol boats in future regional conflicts gave the navy a mission" [Ref 5:p.14] and "the need to protect India's growing external trade, its 200 mile exclusive economic zone and its offshore exploitation of resources have given additional weight to arguments favoring the expansion of the navy." [Ref 5:p.14] In addition, "the Nixonian deployment of the Enterprise during the 1971 war was really the straw that broke the self-imposed restraints on Indian Naval expansion." [Ref 6:p.38]

While the presence of powerful military forces allows for projection of influence and is paramount for true regional dominance in the Indian Ocean, this thesis will omit a direct discussion of the development of India's military. The reason for this omission is that regardless of actions taken by India to develop its military forces, true predominance in South Asia can only come from an acceptance of this position by other regional players. It is sufficient to state that all three wings of India's military are very sophisticated and there is considerable effort

being placed on obtaining the most advanced equipment for their use. Hence, the first chapter of this thesis will not specifically describe Indian unilateral actions to become a regional military power--given that this is occurring and will likely continue--but instead will focus on events and nations inside and outside the Indian Ocean which have prevented India from realizing the goal of South Asian regional predominance.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, the final section of the chapter will look at India's desire to play a greater role in the Indian Ocean<sup>2</sup> and how that desire has been repeatedly thwarted by events beyond her capability to control--forcing India to realize her limited ability to project power outside of South Asia.

#### A. INDIA AND SOUTH ASIA

An emerging view in India is that she has a legitimate role in the domestic political development of the countries which surround her. Additionally, there is a perception that outside powers do not have reasons for deploying forces into the Indian Ocean and any attempt to develop influence within South Asia, through close bilateral relations,

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<sup>1</sup> Reference to the region of South Asia include the nations of India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Maldives, Bhutan, and Bangladesh.

<sup>2</sup> Any reference to the Indian Ocean region includes the entire Indian Ocean and the adjacent seas as depicted in *Indian Ocean Atlas* Central Intelligence Agency, August 1976.

will be met by Indian criticism towards the power projecting influence and some form of punishment to the regional country. India has shown sufficient evidence of a willingness to resort to force, economic and military, even when not provoked. The perception by India's six neighbors of her potential threat to their independent actions has been the basis for an inability by the countries of South Asia to establish sound relations.

Since the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947, relations between the seven states in South Asia "have been marked by deep suspicion and antagonism, even during periods of comparatively 'normal' interactions." [Ref 7:p.11] The British withdrawal and subsequent Indo-Pakistan conflicts brought about a fundamental change in the power equation in the region with India "the dominant major power, Pakistan as a significant middle power, Bangladesh as a weak and dependent middle power, Sri Lanka and Nepal as weak and small powers, and Bhutan and the Maldives as mini states." [Ref 8:p.889] This asymmetrical power configuration has resulted in foreign policy positions by the six smaller states being taken with total regard to a perceived threat of Indian domination. However, with the exception of Pakistan, "whatever reservations or suspicions the smaller states have about India, tend to be overshadowed by the fact that they are dependent upon India in times of crisis." [Ref 7:p.11]

India, by virtue of its size and resources, has been the preeminent power in the region. However, its desire for predominance in South Asian affairs has not been forthcoming due largely to reservations by regional actors and an unwillingness to accept a predominant position for India in

the region by outside powers. Additionally "there is plenty of postulating by Indian academics and commentators on India's ordained regional role." [Ref 9:p.269] Hence, there is understandable anxiety over India's hegemonic desires and intentions.

Though hampered during the Cold war, India's domination of South Asian affairs is perhaps inevitable. "Regional dominance implies the existence of local military preponderance over neighbors through the spectrum of force, the availability of non-military instruments of pressure (including inducement and economic coercion), the ability to influence the consequences following upon domestic political weaknesses in rival regional states, and a willingness to conduct a strategy of diplomacy that places regional dominance above other objectives." [Ref 10:p.6] India is in this position and its regional preeminence is so substantial that it has been accepted by the outside powers "and implicitly so by all South Asian states as well, even including Pakistan." [Ref 10:p.6] The gradual reduction of influence and interest in South Asia by the U.S. and Soviet Union and improving bilateral relations between India and China make this position only stronger and have forced regional nations to begin accepting India's role.

The implementation of the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in 1983<sup>3</sup> has opened a window by which each of the

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<sup>3</sup> The idea of the South Asian association of regional cooperation was raised in 1980 by General Zia-Ur-Rahman, then president of Bangladesh. He formally proposed a summit conference to discuss ways of promoting relations in the region and develop a forum like ASEAN. Foreign ministers met on August 1, 1983 and officially launched the organization.

countries can create greater economic interdependence, and a forum for discussion of regional and bilateral issues--though this is not an expressed part of its basic charter. The most recent Indian governments under VP Singh and Chandra Shekhar have made the most dramatic efforts of any previous governments to improve relations in the region and to push the regional organization beyond its infancy stages. At the same time India has not given in to these nations but has cultivated their acceptance to her position without forgoing her security interests. A discussion of these bilateral issues that have prevented closer cooperation amongst these nations with India and as a result India's legitimate predominance, is the basis for the following section.

Once again it must be clarified that positive relations between countries is a two way affair. It is not possible to just blame the six smaller nations in the region for poor relations with India. India's actions and overbearance on many issues have been as great a factor in hampering closer ties as has the unwillingness by these countries to accept India's regional role.

#### **1. Pakistan**

Pakistan has by far been the greatest thorn in India's side. "The confessional Muslim basis of Pakistan's birth, and the communal nature of its partition from India in 1947, have defined India as Pakistan's premier enemy and dictated its military expenditures and deployments." [Ref 11:p.2] It has stood opposite India on every major international and regional issue faced by both countries. A typical

Indian attitude about Pakistan is that of Krishna Menon, an Indian politician whose role in the formulation of India's foreign policy was next only to Nehru, who stated in 1964:

My belief is that Pakistan leaders looked upon Pakistan as a first installment, thinking in terms of the English doctrine take what you can and fight for more. They have never accepted the Partition as final, as we did. Their main approach to the problem was that India was theirs; India was a Muslim country historically; the British had taken it away from them;...Pakistan will do anything and everything against us.... Its aggression is not for a place, not for Kashmir alone; the aggression is against India, against secularism. [Ref 12:p.279-280]

There are many in India after partition that felt Pakistan would not survive and would again become a part of India. The partition was heavily opposed by many--Hindu and Muslim alike--but Nehru, believing that India would have to function as a unified country eventually, recognized that perhaps the best way to get the British out of the country was to accept a partition at the present. "At Simla, VK Menon urged him to accept a quick partition in order to avert the further spread of communal bitterness and to prepare for later reunification." [Ref 13:p.51] However, as these expectations have not materialized, it is India, not Pakistan, that is more willing to accept the International boundaries established by history and fortify relations between the two countries. This is supported by Pakistan's continued support of rebels in India and the two wars over Kashmir which Pakistan has initiated.

Pakistan's participation in the U.S. global defense system from the 1950's has brought her much in the terms of weapons and military aid. This relationship has also helped her to forge ties with Middle Eastern



countries, particularly evident in the 1980's after the Soviet's invasion of Afghanistan. The beefing up of Pakistan's military has allowed her to maintain the capability to combat her southern neighbor and has been one reason for India forging ties with the Soviet Bloc in order to prevent Pakistan from gaining an edge over India. While no U.S. supplied weapons in Pakistan have ever been used against the Soviets--with the possible exception of Afghanistan--many have been used in two of her wars with India.

The two countries have gone to war on three separate occasions--in 1947, 1965, and 1971. The 1971 conflict, resulting in the separation of Pakistan's eastern wing and the creation of Bangladesh, radically altered the strategic situation on the subcontinent in India's favor. Though Pakistan continues to build its military in an effort to counter the threat from India, she is not capable of militarily defeating India. The likely possibility that increased tensions in the early months of 1990 might lead to another war, was very high. The biggest international fear was the possible use of nuclear weapons most likely initiated by Pakistan--being defeated conventionally--but also in retaliation to the initial use by India. Both, realizing the senselessness of another war, and combined with extreme pressure from both superpowers, extended diplomatic efforts to prevent the escalating tensions from reaching the point of no return. [Ref 14]

Pakistan--though officially denied--has increased its efforts to fuel secessionist factions in Kashmir and the Punjab by training and aiding rebels. These efforts are in an attempt to justify its existence as a Muslim country and support the claim that minority religions cannot

live in a "secular India." India, on the other hand, will not allow its country once again to be divided as it was in 1947 and has denounced Pakistan's actions as an intervention in India's internal affairs, and has called upon the U.S. to impress upon Islamabad the importance of refraining from such subversive action.

It would be unfair not to give India some of the credit for hampering relations between the two countries. India has voiced repeated concern over any Pakistani attempts to develop relations outside the region, viewing these ties as a threat to her security. It was India, regardless of the reasons, who violated Pakistan's sovereignty by taking military actions in East Pakistan in 1971. India has also been blamed repeatedly by Pakistan for encouraging separatist tendencies in Pakistan. While India denies these claims and blames them on an attempt from Islamabad to draw attention away from Pakistani actions, given India's aiding of Tamil revolutionaries in Sri Lanka, this action is surely possible.

The biggest problem between the two countries has been the ideological differences that first divided them as well as Pakistan's desires to prove that it was equal to or better than India. While, Pakistan's relations with the U.S. and the Gulf countries has brought it much military aid, neither of these two have taken staunch pro-Pakistani positions--by continuing the aid--during times of war with India. Thus, as her strategic importance to the U.S. has declined with the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, and her restricted role in the defense of Saudi Arabia has called into question her importance to moderate Arab regimes, Pakistan for the first time in its history is faced with the

dilemma of either improving its relations with India and South Asia or risk isolating itself from much of the world. Pakistan must accept the realization that her future as well as her roots lie in South Asia.

The Pakistani's have a long standing friendship with China--supported heavily by the Chinese as a counter to the Indo-Soviet ties as well as a fear during the 1980's that the Soviets would move from Afghanistan into Pakistan to surround China [Ref 13:p.68]. The improving Sino-Indian relations and Sino-Soviet relations will reduce Pakistan's position of advantage in Beijing. Additionally, the carrot of most favored nation status which China enjoys with the U.S. and is currently being reviewed in the U.S. Congress could be an overriding factor to reduced Chinese military assistance to Pakistan. Pakistan has also had good relations with Iran and the Gulf States. Yet, Iran's new found neutrality and a desire to play a greater role in Gulf security will likely keep her from overtly aiding Pakistan in its military development. The Gulf countries are trying to create a security system to counter threats from inside and outside the Gulf. It is unlikely that these countries will take Pakistan's side in a conflict against India--except possibly if India initiates the situation--as this would likely require the emerging security system as a whole to concur.

The recent bilateral agreement in February 1991 between India and Pakistan to keep from attempting a preemptive strike upon each others nuclear facilities and the positive efforts by both Prime Ministers at the SAARC conference in November 1990 are the first step towards improved relations. While this agreement largely nullifies U.S. attempts to prevent proliferation of nuclear weapons in the subcontinent and may be

cause for a readjustment of U.S. policy towards both countries, regarding their nuclear programs, it does help to create better relations between the two. That these relations must improve is not a given. However, SAARC is an acceptable tool in creating confidence building measures to at least become more economically interdependent and learn to coexist with respect for each others' sovereignty. As the preeminent regional power, it is vital that India who is surely not without blame for these relations, be willing to accept Pakistan's ties outside the region for the creation of a better atmosphere for bilateral relations.

## 2. Sri Lanka

Ties between India and its island neighbor Sri Lanka have never been very close. While, "there have been occasional periods of tension in their relationship, for the most part both sides have adopted 'low-posture' rather than confrontationist strategies toward each other." [Ref 16:p.57] Yet both have followed distinctively different policies regarding the security in the region. Good relations between the two have been hampered by continuing Sri Lankan attempts to improve relations with both superpowers as well as other countries capable of providing her with military aid. Her reasons for encouraging the presence of outside powers has been to contribute to "Colombo's capacity to adopt more flexible policies toward its giant neighbor to the north." [Ref 16:p.58] Additionally, problems have been created by India's aid to the Tamil

minority in Sri Lanka as well as training and harboring Tamil revolutionaries in secret camps in India. [Ref 9:p.275]

One area on which India and Sri Lanka agree has been the call for declaring the Indian Ocean a zone of peace. At the third non-aligned conference at Lusaka in 1970, India and Sri Lanka emphasized the need for this declaration and "the U.N. General Assembly on December 16, 1971, declared the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace for all times to come." [Ref 17:p.238] However, Sri Lanka's actions have not always been supportive of her calls for this declaration.

Regarding U.S. involvement, the strategic value of an ex-naval base at Trinconalee and an air force base at Katunayake were very high on U.S. interests in the 1970's. The U.S. made a tempting offer of a \$600 million oil refinery in exchange for greater use of these two facilities. In 1981, the Sri Lankan government proposed leasing out 100 oil storage tanks lying idle since World War II to the U.S. based Coastal Corporation as an oil storage terminal complete with refueling facilities. While seen by Sri Lanka as an attempt to increase foreign exchange, this was viewed by India as another attempt to turn over the Trincomalee Base to the U.S. for naval facilities. The U.S. and Sri Lanka also signed an agreement to expand the Voice of America relay station at Chican in 1986, though heavily opposed by India. [Ref 18:p.157]

However, despite India's anxiety, the major powers have limited their attempts to gain influence in Sri Lanka and "...it appeared that there was a greater eagerness on the part of Colombo to barter away her strategic advantages...for security guarantee against a perceived threat from India." [Ref 19:p.90] The U.S. and the Soviets have both stayed

clear of Sri Lanka since the escalation of ethnic violence in the 1980's due to relations with India and even more importantly, "... the roots and conduct of the Sri Lankan crisis have next to nothing to do with the Great Powers...." [Ref 20:p.1167]

Problems in Sri Lanka since the early 1980's have heightened Indian interests in that country. The increase in military activity by insurgent groups, known collectively as the "Tamil Tigers", and the fear that separatist desires of the Tamils might fuel similar problems in India has been cause for concern in New Delhi. The influx of masses of Tamil refugees--who have an historical linkage to Indians in the southern state of Tamilnadu--has also increased Indian anxiety over the situation in Sri Lanka. In addition, renewed attempts by Colombo to seek military assistance and counterinsurgency training from outside the region--including the U.S., Soviets, and Chinese--and actual training received from agencies in Israel and Pakistan have been viewed as unnecessary by India as well as a threat to India's security environment. That this assistance might be used to gain influence in Sri Lanka was paramount in Indian fears. Conversely, there has been an even greater fear in Sri Lanka that Tamil concerns in India would bring an Indian intervention into Sri Lanka's internal affairs.

Indian mediation efforts in hopes of a peaceful solution to the ethnic problems have been undercut by repeated statements against India by Sri Lankan leaders. Continued persecution of Tamil civilians and an economic blockade of the northern region where they are a majority, resulted in a great deal of pressure upon the central Indian government to act in order to prevent further harm to the Tamils in Sri Lanka.

After attempts by India to ship humanitarian supplies into the city of Jaffna were blocked, India provided a true example of its power and willingness to exercise that power, by air dropping provisions on June 5, 1987 with five AN-32 freighters escorted by 4 Mirage 2000. While a clear violation of Sri Lankan air space--this step was justified in India as a humanitarian action. [Ref 21]

The Indo-Sri Lankan accord signed in July 1987 appeared to be a time for approachment between the two countries. The 40-50 thousand Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) were sent in hopes of maintaining the integrity of the island nation while gaining some degree of autonomy for the Tamils. Many of the Tiger Groups, based and trained in southern India, hoped that this move would lead to a separate Tamil homeland of Eelam--but this was well beyond Indian intentions. The IPKF eventually turned to fighting the Tigers--the very group they had come to save.

Approval of India's actions by the U.S. and USSR as well as denying assistance to Sri Lanka while telling Colombo to look to its neighbor for help, have been viewed by India as acceptance of India's role in South Asia. While the IPKF was withdrawn in March 1990 and its deployment generally seen as a military failure for India, the problems in Sri Lanka between the two ethnic factions continues unabated. Despite a continued influx of refugees and claims of atrocities by the Sri Lankan Army towards Tamils, the recent Indian Government has turned a blind eye to the problems in Sri Lanka and recently dismissed the state government in Tamilnadu for aiding and harboring known Tamil insurgents. These factors may be cause for possible improvements in relations between the two countries. New Delhi's main reason for strong-arming Colombo's

acceptance of the Sri Lankan accord was to prevent and remove the presence of foreign influences on the island. Having accomplished this--though Indian troops have withdrawn, India still claims that the accord signed in July 1987 is valid--a repeated intervention is neither desired nor expected.

Current problems between the two countries continue, while New Delhi desires to develop a new treaty with the same limitations as the 1987 accord--which did not allow for foreign involvement in Sri Lankan security--Sri Lanka is unwilling to have such limitations forced upon her. Until a new treaty is signed, as far as India is concerned"...the 1987 accord and its various accompaniments will continue to be in force." [Ref 22:p.71] Hopefully, as economic relations in South Asia improve, the two countries can also dissolve the remainder of their bilateral issues to a degree acceptable to both.

### **3. The Maldives**

The Maldives is of interest to regional and external powers due to its strategic location in the Indian Ocean and the presence of an air base at Gan built by the British during World War II. "Since 1976, India, Pakistan, the USSR, the United States, Great Britain, China, Japan, and several ASEAN and West Asian states have sought to assert roles for themselves in the Maldives on a low-profile but nonetheless competitive basis." [Ref 16:p.61] The strategic importance of this island nation to India is high, due specifically to its own island territory of Minicoy only 90 miles north of the Maldives. Intrusion into



the country from foreign powers or a hostile neighbor can be ill-afforded by India. Relations between the two countries have always been on sound footing and India has attempted to create various cultural and educational links with the Maldives.

The Maldivian leaders have steered away from involving themselves in the entanglements of security alliances and as a member of SAARC maintain equitable relations with all nations inside and outside the region. This is quite amicable to Indian desires as the Maldivian leadership has limited its attempts to draw in outside powers for the benefits of its economy. The nation has also been supportive of moves for creating a "zone of peace" in the Indian ocean.

India's immediate response to requests for aid in preventing a coup on November 3, 1988 has forged relations between the two nations. A joint operation, under the code name Cactus, of India's military forces quickly foiled an attempt by 150-200 Tamil mercenaries to overthrow the government of the Maldives and brought much international and regional praise for India's actions. This action has been viewed as a clear example of "India's growing role as a great power in the South Asian region." [Ref 23:p.30]

#### **4. Bangladesh**

India's intervention into East Pakistan in 1971 began its third war with Pakistan and ended in the creation of an independent nation of Bangladesh. India's part in the creation of Bangladesh ensured that their relations began on the right foot. Yet the military's involvement

in the politics in Bangladesh has led to its attempts to seek relations with other powers including Pakistan and China. Though relations with India have not led to armed conflict, differences between the two countries include border problems, Bangladesh refugees in India, maritime boundaries and water rights. Diplomatic efforts by both have insured that the two will solve their problems peacefully.

India has remained aloof from internal developments in Bangladesh and has been very supportive of recent democratic trends in this nation. Though a founding member of SAARC and the idea of regional cooperation, Bangladesh has sought military cooperation from abroad which may lead to security implications in India. Recent involvement in the Gulf crisis by Bangladesh could--but probably will not--increase military aid to this tiny nation. Bangladesh's attempts to forge constructive ties outside of the region will likely fail. The distance between it and West Asia is great as is the disparity between its economy and those of the South East Asian countries. Hence, like Pakistan, her roots and her future lie in improving her relations in South Asia. Additionally, her creation occurred at the same general time when India was being viewed by the Superpowers as the regional power--thus giving Bangladesh no historical linkage to outside powers.

It is of interest to note that the U.S. is providing a great deal of humanitarian aid and assistance to Bangladesh following a devastating natural disaster which has left millions homeless. India has voiced concern of the presence of such a large number of U.S. ships so close to her borders, but her anxiety is both unnecessary and uncalled for.

[Ref 24]

## 5. Nepal

Indo-Nepalese relations have been based on a relationship where Nepal accepted Indian guidance on external relations and security issues for almost complete internal autonomy. This was the same relationship she had established with Great Britain during her rule of India. This relationship was to be the basis of the treaty signed between the two in July 1950, but the Chinese annexation of Tibet and internal political problems in Nepal have forced a change. [Ref 13:p.317]

Nepal has sought to develop relations with other nations--specifically China--to counter its dependence upon India. The Chinese have been supportive of Nepal's attempts by increasing trade and arms aid to the tiny nation. Nepal's attempts to use the China card against India has led to undermining the special relationship between the two and heightened Indian fears of Chinese expansion of influence within its security orbit. India has proposed a renewal of the special economic relationship, which is a security interest for India and a national interest for Nepal as the land locked nation requires transit rights through India for its trade. Nepal has hesitated, but China's commitment to her economic well being has been cautious and India's use of economic coercion has caused significant problems for the country's economy.

[Ref 25]

Out of pure necessity in Nepal, Indo-Nepalese relations appear to be improving. The two have signed important trade agreements which are appeasing to both sides. The main factor forcing Nepal's hand is China's fragile support, hence leaving it but one way to turn. India's near

destruction of Nepal's economy over an exaggerated fear of Chinese influence in that country was uncalled for. While this fear may have been acceptable in the fifties and sixties, it is likely exaggerated in the current decade. Future relations between these two nations must be based on an acceptance by India of Nepal's peaceful intentions to develop relations with countries outside of South Asia and a realization in Nepal of legitimate Indian security concerns.

#### 6. Bhutan

The last of the seven nations of South Asia is Bhutan. Responding to the Chinese annexation of Tibet, Bhutan accepted an accommodation with India, under the Treaty of 1949, making it part of India's security system. The economic benefits to this tiny nation have been tremendous as India has responded with very generous economic assistance for development programs. There have been little to no problems between the two countries as relations have been satisfactory to both.

In summary, India's desire to become the security manager of South Asia has not been explicitly accepted by all the nations in the region. However, with this in mind, India has attempted to prevent linkages between the nations of the region with powers outside of South Asia--thus, de facto, allowing for the development of an Indian security umbrella in South Asia.

Future stability in South Asia "...will strongly depend on the success of India, as the largest country in the region, in persuading its smaller neighbors that it does not want to violate their national sovereignty and that it is prepared to respect their independence and territorial integrity." [Ref 26:p.1162] While her actions have been based upon a fear that outside involvement would impede upon her security environment and curb Indian influence, it is time for India to improve its bilateral relations with full regard to concerns in the smaller states. The latest Indian governments have shown a tendency towards developing closer regional ties--yet current political instability in India has delayed the progress for now.

There is little doubt that India has used every means at its disposal to prevent outside influence in South Asia. Nations attempting to develop ties outside the region have had to face a barrage of criticism from India which has only exacerbated bilateral and regional issues. The examination of bilateral issues in South Asia in the preceding chapter does not attempt to justify India's actions or blame the smaller states for regional problems. There must be a clear understanding that India as the major power in the region has a definite responsibility to create an improved atmosphere for better relations amongst all seven regional states--a policy which she has not always followed in the past.

## **B. MAJOR POWERS AND SOUTH ASIA**

Involvement of the major powers--the Soviet Union, U.S., China, and the Islamic Nations, specifically Saudi Arabia and Iran--in South Asia have also been a factor in prohibiting Indian predominance in the region. However, it can be said that in the long run India has been somewhat successful in its dealing with these nations as at present their influence in South Asia is declining--more as a result of international events than India's influence--but declining just the same.

### **1. The Soviet Union**

Soviet-Indo relations had their beginnings in the 1950's. Various factors--including the Sino-Soviet split, U.S.-Pakistani relations and India's influence in the third world via leadership of the non-aligned movement (NAM)--have allowed for improved relations between the two countries. As Sino-Soviet relations took a turn for the worse in the 1950's, the Soviets took advantage of deteriorating Sino-Indian relations by improving its relations with New Delhi. India's position of leadership in the NAM and a belief in Moscow that this could be an advantage to Soviet influence in the third world, as well as, Indian fears regarding a threat from the growing U.S.-Pakistan friendship gave both a reason for improving ties.

The 1962 Sino-Indian war ended India's non-aligned status as she immediately sought military aid from whomever would provide it. The Soviets' delivery of its first shipment of MIG-21's in 1963 began the

military relationship and her continued arms shipments during the 1965 Indo-Pakistani war--despite an embargo by the U.S.--was a critical point in India's "tilt" towards Moscow. [Ref 27:p.12-15]

Despite some difficulties in their relationship and the limited influence which India actually had in Moscow, the Soviets have promoted India's position in South Asia [Ref 28]. The Soviets have been supportive of India's regional role and thus unlike the other nations being discussed have not been a real factor in suppressing India's regional aspirations. Recent changes in the Soviet Union and major economic problems have resulted in the Soviets need for hard currency. This has undermined the special economic relationship between India and the Soviets--for the Soviets cannot provide India with military equipment on as favorable a basis as they have in the past--but both sides have tried to assure each other of the desire to continue close ties. Given the changes in the Soviet Union, its descendancy from superpower status has left a void in India's security position which she will look to the West to fill. As the Soviets are in no economic condition to support any military efforts, she has softened her pro-Indian position on Kashmir, for a more mid-line stance expressing the hope that neither country would resort to war to solve their dispute. While this is not what India would hope for--it is in line with the improving Soviet relations with China and the U.S. and Moscow's unwillingness to create disharmony between these two countries and itself. [Ref 29]

## 2. China

The Indo-Chinese relationship has for centuries been based on peaceful coexistence. Nehru felt in 1947 that "Whatever changes might take place in Asia, and the winds of change, as he described them, were blowing over the whole continent, Sino-Indian friendship seemed one of the stable factors." [Ref 30:p.7] Though under a great deal of external pressure--specifically from the U.S.--India supported communist China's application to the United Nations in the early 1950's and attempted to mediate a resolution between Chinese and UN forces in Korea. India at the time "opposed the United Nations resolutions branding China an aggressor in the Korean war, criticized the United States' actions to neutralize Taiwan in 1950 and attacked the Peace Treaty with Japan because it had been registered by the United States without reference to China." [Ref 31:p.82-83] Despite differences raised over China's annexation of Tibet, India went to great distances to maintain the peaceful relations between the two countries.

China's annexation of Tibet also brought into play an agreement between Great Britain and Tibet in 1914 which established the McMahon line. This line pushed India's border some 60 miles north--a position which China did not accept. An uprising in Tibet in the late 1950's and India's sanctuary to the Dalai Lama--Tibet's main religious leader--and many Tibetians led to quickly deteriorating Sino-Indian ties. Both nations increased military patrols in the region which led to repeated skirmishes and eventually the 1962 conflict.



The 1962 war between the two countries ended the historically known five principles of coexistence or Panch Sheela<sup>4</sup> as they are called in the Hindi Language. It has become apparent that these five principles were more of a facade for Communist China's true intentions to seek influence in South Asia. The humiliating Indian defeat at the hands of the Chinese altered India's destiny as her policies of peaceful coexistence turned into a need to build a military infrastructure of combatting a two-faced threat from China and Pakistan.

While the Chinese have persisted in attempts to build anti-Indian sentiment in the border nations between the two countries and in Sri Lanka, their strongest relationship in South Asia is with Pakistan. After the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, China's relationship with Pakistan expanded as she perceived its security against a Soviet threat was in turn crucial to preventing the Soviets from circling China. This relationship has continued and China has been instrumental in Pakistan's nuclear development and recently leased her a nuclear submarine in response to the Soviet nuclear submarine leased to India.

As relations between these two Asian giants--India and China--attempt to improve, the Chinese have since the mid 70's lessened the extent to which their policies encourage anti-Indian positions in the

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<sup>4</sup> The April 1954 Indo-Sino trade agreement was notable for first enshrining the five principles of coexistence--Panch Sheela--respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states, non-aggression, non interference in internal affairs, equality and mutuality, and peaceful coexistence. For a text of this agreement see R. K. Jain ed., *China-South Asian Relations 1947-1980*, Harvester Press, 1981 vol. 1, pp.61-64.

border countries and in India itself, and India has decreased its support of Tibetan rebel groups and its demands for a reduction of Sino-Pakistani ties. [Ref 13:p.323] So while a cold war persists between the two powers, attempts to develop confidence measures and decrease the border tension between the two is ongoing. The likelihood of successful Chinese intervention into South Asia is waning as is the influence it can project into the Indian Ocean--yet India's military policies are more and more based upon ensuring China continues to stay outside the Indian Ocean and against the ever present fear of a Sino-Pakistani joint operation against India "to teach her yet another lesson."

The changing Chinese view of India in the 70's was in hopes of countering Soviet influence in India. "Improving relations with New Delhi was considered a better way to do this than a continuation of confrontationist politics of 1960-1975." [Ref 13:p.323] Indian fears are growing as improvements in Sino-Soviet relations present the Chinese with the chance to bring more of its forces to the Indian border. However, any action by China against India will be closely watched by the U.S. and India today is much more capable of handling a Chinese invasion than she was in 1962. Both of these factors will act as a deterrent to Chinese adventurism.

### **3. Middle East Countries**

The nations of the Middle East--after the fall of the Shah of Iran--have posed no serious potential military threat to India. However, Pakistan's attempts to link herself with these countries after partition

and even to join alliances with Iran, Turkey and Iraq, for some time, has forced India to counter the threat of complete Islamic support of Pakistan against India during a military conflict. India's positive relations with other nations in the region helped minimize any material assistance to Pakistan during conflicts in 1965 and 1971.

In its efforts to maintain these relations, India has supported the causes of the Arabs and the Middle East nations, who have responded by remaining non-partisan on issues between India and Pakistan. Thus India has been relatively successful in countering Pakistan's attempts to use Islam to create a bloc of support against India and should be able to maintain this position despite recent events in the Gulf crisis and India's positions on them.

#### **4. The United States**

India has always wanted to maintain strong diplomatic ties with the United States. However, various factors have stood in the way of these relations. Despite U.S. military aid during the 1962 conflict with China and economic and food assistance at various times of need in India, the United States' view of India's stand on non-alignment and her close relations with the Soviet Union has caused both to see each other through the cold war alignments.

The United States' commitment to Pakistan has specifically been a barrier to Indo-U.S. relations. "Washington's decision in the mid 1950's to build up Pakistan militarily, ostensibly to contain the threat from the Soviet Union to the free world, had a formative impact on India's

view of the United States." [Ref 3:p.110] U.S. military assistance to Pakistan seriously undermined India's managerial role on the subcontinent and, from an Indian perspective, created a major security threat for India, clearly evidenced in 1965 when Pakistan effectively used its American weaponry against India. [Ref 3:p.108] The United States' embargo of both of these countries during the 1965 war, though more of a problem for Pakistan, left both nations with a feeling that the U.S. could not be counted on for support and has thus since been labeled an unreliable ally by both India and Pakistan.

A clear tilt towards Pakistan during the 1971 Indo-Pakistani war, evidenced by deployment of the USS ENTERPRISE to the Indian Ocean and by massive arms aid despite Pakistani atrocities in East Pakistan, further heightened Indian anxieties about the U.S. A secret trip to China by Kissinger from Pakistan increased Indian fears about a U.S.-Pakistan-Chinese axis and resulted in India's signing a Treaty of Friendship with the Soviet Union in 1971.

The United States' reduction of aid to Pakistan prior to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, over questions of nuclear proliferation, was viewed positively by India. However, the massive buildup of Pakistani forces with weapons more suitable to an attack on India vice defense against the Soviets through Afghanistan combined with the "decision to maintain a permanent naval presence through expansion of Diego Garcia" [Ref 6:p.38] after the Soviet's actions in Afghanistan were factors inhibiting improved Indo-U.S. relations in the early 1980's.

When relations with the Soviets seemed at their best, India made significant attempts to diversify its arms imports by gaining access to

Western--specifically U.S.--defense technology. "The poor performance of Soviet hardware in the 1982 Syrian-Israeli air battle had caused deep concern among Indian officials" [Ref 33:p.50] Hence, obtaining advanced systems from the U.S. made sense and could be viewed as an attempt by India to denounce the critics who saw her as a Soviet client state, especially after its official positions on the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The U.S. viewed India's desires to improve relations as an opportunity to draw her away from the Soviet Union, or "at least as an opening for India to follow a more balanced policy towards the rival superpowers." [Ref 33:p.50]

The U.S. began to see India's emergence as a regional power with a strong military arm capable of helping to maintain U.S. interests in the Indian Ocean. "Thus in October, 1984 President Reagan signed a secret directive instructing U.S. government agencies to seek improved relations with India and accommodate Indian requests for dual-use technology." [Ref 3:p.113] U.S. acquiescence to India's role in the region was not given outright. However, Washington's public endorsement of the India-Sri Lanka accord in July 1987, which demonstrated the peacekeeping role India aspired to in South Asia, and was viewed in India as "tacit acceptance of India's managerial role in all of South Asia except Pakistan " [Ref 3:p.114]

From an Indian perspective, good relations with the U.S. are a must. The end of the cold war makes this relationship more valuable in the context of declining U.S.-Pakistan ties and continuing Islamabad-Beijing relations. The importance of this relationship to the Indians is evidenced by the number of articles in Indian papers during

the Gulf conflict denying any deterioration in ties as a result of India's Gulf positions. As both nations can now view each other outside of the cold war glasses the likelihood of sound relations--with ever present bilateral issues of concern--is stronger than at anytime in the past. A realization by the U.S. administration of internal Indian political problems during the Gulf crisis, a factor influencing Indian positions in the Gulf, is evidenced by very little U.S. concern over India's Gulf statements and the suspension of U.S. refueling activities by the U.S. to prevent further political chaos.<sup>5</sup>

The recent deterioration of U.S. relations with Pakistan due to renewed concern over Pakistan attempts to develop a nuclear weapon have resulted in an increased tilt towards India by the U.S. This is further enhanced by the declining strategic position that Pakistan has played with waning American fears of communist expansion. This is evidenced by a continued unwillingness to approve arms aid to Pakistan despite its military role in the Gulf theatre. As this tilt towards India continues--it is vital that both countries attempt to resolve issues standing between them. This will certainly call for India learning to live with a strong U.S. and its presence in the Indian Ocean. Continued warming of Indo-U.S. ties is more dependent upon India than upon the U.S. The U.S. no longer needs to accommodate India's every desire, in an attempt to counter closer Indo-Soviet relations, for the realities of an

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<sup>5</sup> For more detailed discussion of India's evolving position on the Gulf War, see below, chapter III, section C, p.53.

international system with essentially one superpower forces India to place greater emphasis upon its ties with the U.S. than vice versa.

Strong U.S.-Indo ties should reduce the perception of a threat from the U.S. in India and serve to enhance its position against a possible Pakistan-Chinese axis. This should also decrease Indian criticism of the U.S. Naval Forces--despite the Indian anxiety expressed during recent U.S. aid to Bangladesh--in the region as they will, and always have been, directed at security in the Persian Gulf, which is a vital security interest to both nations. Additionally, U.S. discussions with China over its military aid to Pakistan--especially assistance in developing its nuclear potential--is of great interest to India, as is the U.S.'s position that the Kashmir dispute be solved bilaterally in conjunction with the 1972 Simla agreement.

### **C. INDIA'S SEEKING A GREATER REGIONAL ROLE**

#### **1. The Indian Ocean**

The Indian Ocean is the smallest of the three largest oceans of the world. It has for centuries, served as the passageway of economic, political and cultural interaction between the surrounding nations. The shape of the ocean has been described as "M" shaped with the Indian subcontinent forming the central "V" land mass, dividing the ocean into separate quadrants of vital concern. As the British realized two centuries ago, and the Indians realize now, the Indian subcontinent is

the strategic center of the ocean, and any power based on the subcontinent has an inherent interest in projection of power into all areas of the ocean.

The importance of the region has grown with time. The need to insure the safe passage of commerce by external nations through the strategic ingress/egress points from the Pacific and Atlantic oceans has impacted the region dramatically. The growing reliance upon natural resources of the region by nations outside the ocean has increasingly drawn foreign militaries into regional politics and is the basis of most of the foreign policy activity in the region today.

The legacy of British beliefs of the Indian Ocean and their role in it persists in India today. The rapid development of Indian naval forces (see appendix) is evidence of a goal to project influence to all corners of the Indian Ocean and beyond, as well as, the more important need to minimize any possible threat from hostile neighbors from the sea. However, the realities of a greater Indian Ocean role for India has been hampered time and again by international events.

There are only two areas vital to Indian security that are currently worth discussing, the Northeast and Northwest quadrants. While the southern half of the ocean has two relatively important nations with sizable naval forces--South Africa and Australia--neither poses a threat to Indian national security nor to the disruption of lines of communication in the region.



## 2. The Northeast Quadrant

The Northeastern quadrant of the Indian Ocean is dominated by the Indonesian Archipelago. This creates a natural barrier between the nations of East Asia and the Indian Ocean. This region has a handful of major passageways which are used by both naval and commercial shipping to transit between the Atlantic and Indian Ocean and provide, for example, vital shipping lanes for Japanese oil imports from the Middle East. The security of these passageways is of utmost importance to all regional players--China, India, Japan, USSR,--the local nations and the United States.

Future Chinese and Indian maritime competition will be centered in this region as both nations attempt to project influence upon local countries. U.S. presence in the Philippines and in Singapore will dampen the actual effects of Sino-Indian competitive positions for now, but not decrease efforts by both to apply influence in the region vis a vis each other. Indian fears of Chinese adventurism in the region are exacerbated by the locality of Indian claims only a short distance from the area. The presence of Indian naval base on Great Nicobar island only 80 miles from Sumatra, have enhanced Chinese anxiety over Indian attempts to impinge upon areas in the South China Sea. The local countries continue to counter influence from both countries by enhancing their own naval development programs which has led to increased naval cooperation among the ASEAN countries and cooperation with Australia and New Zealand. [Ref 34:p.11] These efforts are vital to security of all of these countries as none has the ability to protect itself alone.

### 3. The Northwest Quadrant

The Northwest quadrant of the Indian Ocean contains the Red Sea, the Arabian Sea, and the Persian Gulf. The navies of the countries in this region are fairly modest with only the Saudi's and Iran having committed much effort at building small naval forces. India's interest in this area are the same as most other nations of the world--the access to stable flow and stable priced oil. Additionally, at risk for India are the 1.2 million Indians currently working and living in the Gulf region who supply India with much needed remittances. The United States' concerns over this necessity has resulted in attempts to access basing right in the region and a continued major U.S. Naval presence since the British withdrawal from the area in the 1970's. This concern has also led to continued U.S. support of Pakistan in U.S. endeavors to prevent Soviet influence in the Gulf.

India surely saw the chance to increase her security role in the Gulf by taking advantage of the end of the cold war to assume a leadership position in the Indian Ocean. However, any Indian hopes for an Indian Ocean security system including the Gulf countries and excluding the superpower navies has been nullified, for the time being, by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. The U.S. will likely continue its naval deployments throughout the 1990's and beyond and be hesitant to rely fully upon any local nations to protect U.S. interests in the region--thus a exclusive naval role for India in the Gulf region is definitely on hold. However, as U.S.-Indo relations improve and U.S. budgetary constraints take effect there may be an increasing gap for

India to fill with regards to security of the lines of communications in the Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea.

While the recent events in the Gulf have increased the U.S. naval presence in the Gulf and may be cause for a permanent regional presence, cuts in U.S. military expenditures may eventually force the U.S. to reduce these deployments. Though this is not foreseen in the near future, the creation of a security system in the Gulf region and a return of Arab calls for limiting U.S. presence may allow for greater Indian participation in protection of these vital shipping lanes.

It has become increasingly obvious to the Indians that they are prevented from wielding influence upon the nations of the Indian Ocean, as the British had done, simply by virtue of their military capability. This is clearly evidenced by the fact that these nations look to the U.S. or the Soviets for assistance in times of conflict and even more so by the realization that India is more economically dependent upon these countries than they are dependent upon India's leadership role in the third world. The world of the 20th century is much different than the world of the 18th and 19th centuries and India must adapt to the current situation and let go of the past.

While the South Asian region has been largely ignored by the Superpowers and will continue to be--with the exception of preventing nuclear proliferation--the other areas of the Indian Ocean are not. Indian influence in South Asia is not of concern to nations outside the region--however, attempts to project power into the other quadrants of the ocean are and will continue to be prevented by forces beyond India's control.

### III. INDIA AND THE PERSIAN GULF CRISIS

#### A. INDIA'S INTEREST IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Before discussing India's actions during the Gulf crisis, it is important to understand her foreign policy concerns in the Middle East. As previously indicated, India has attempted to maintain positive relations with the Middle East nations to counter any gains that Pakistan might achieve from its relations with these countries, based on its Islamic foundation. India has been supportive of Arab causes in the United Nations, for example, the right of the Palestinians to their own state, and for many years supportive of the Arab countries in their endeavors to resist Israel. "India is, so to speak, surrounded by Islamic countries... and was keen to prove to the world that India is a "secular" state and, therefore, does not take sides against the coreligionaries of Pakistan." [Ref 35:p.92-93]

More specifically, India has sought support of her claim to Kashmir--the largest bone of contention between India and Pakistan--from the Middle Eastern regimes. Pakistan's participation in U.S. sponsored alliances in the mid--1950's with Middle East countries Iran, Turkey and Iraq (until 1978) was viewed as a major threat to India.

To counter this perceived threat, India sought to construct a close relationship with several other Islamic states in the region, primarily Egypt and Syria...New Delhi's objective was to prevent the

emergence of a unified Islamic bloc supportive of Pakistan in its recurrent disputes with India, and the Indians were reasonably successful in this endeavor. During the Indo-Pakistani wars of 1965 and 1971, most of the Islamic states adopted positions publicly sympathetic to Pakistan, but only Pakistan's two allies, Iran and Turkey, actually provided small amounts of material assistance. [Ref 13:p.325]

Following the 1971 Indo-Pakistan war, Pakistan--having been strategically reduced by the separation from its eastern half--sought to further increase its relations with its western neighbors. Iran's massive improvements in arms was good reason for Pakistan to attempt to create better relations, as was the oil price increases in the early 70's.

It was, however, resented in Islamabad that Tehran was improving its relations with India and actually equating both countries. "In the 1974-8 period, for instance, Iran under the Shah sought to maintain a security relationship with Pakistan directed at the Soviet Union while, in effect, opting out of its earlier position of support for Pakistan in its disputes with India." [Ref 13:p.326]

While the overthrow of the Shah and resulting collapse of CENTO nullified the threat perceived in India of Pakistan's alliance with the Middle East nations, the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan re-created the threat. A massive boost in U.S. aid to Pakistan preceded an increased role for Pakistan in Gulf security.

In the invasion aftermath, relations between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan improved as diplomatic visits took place at a high level and in rapid succession. Indeed, Afghanistan may have been the clinching argument for Pakistan to send troops to Saudi Arabia; in February 1980, Pakistan's president Zia Ul-Haq encouraged Washington to forge improved Saudi-Pakistani military cooperation, leading the Saudi's to agree to an exchange of arms for Pakistani security assistance. [Ref 15:p.69]

While India was not supportive of the Soviet action in Afghanistan, she refrained from official condemnation of the act for fear of upsetting her primary source of weaponry, particularly in the face of an increasing threat from Pakistan and the developing Sino-Pakistan military alliance.

India's failure to condemn the invasion isolated it from all Gulf countries except Iraq. Although India did score some foreign policy gains in the Gulf by 1981, Pakistan remained the hardest barrier between India and the Gulf States; indeed, India's rejection in 1981 of Pakistan's proposal for a no-war pact injured India's image in the Gulf.

In the view of one observer, this pushed India to improve its relations with Pakistan as a means of bettering its relations with the Gulf States. By intensifying Pakistan's traditional links with the Gulf States, the Afghanistan intervention made it even more difficult for India to increase its influence in the Gulf without first taking some steps to bridge its differences with Pakistan. [Ref 15:p.76]

More recently, Indian relations with the Middle East countries have improved. This is evidenced by a recent trip by Gujral, prior to the invasion, to the Arab world where "all Arab states with the exception of Saudi Arabia, and Iran backed India's stand calling for a resolution of the Kashmir dispute within the framework of the Simla accord" [Ref 36:p.35-36] This accord calls for a bilateral solution to the problem vice an international one which Pakistan has long wanted. "The isolation of Pakistan in the Arab world on an issue with strong Islamic undertones would be a concrete result..." [Ref 36:p.36] for India.

Of vital economic concern to India, as with all oil importing nations, has been a continuous and stable priced supply of oil from the region. The oil price hike in 1973 witnessed improved economic relations between India and the Gulf nations. Iran--India's major supplier at the

time--played a big role in increasing of oil prices and came to India's assistance to "...alleviate India's predicament following the increase in the price of oil." [Ref 35:p.92] "A number of agreements on economic cooperation were signed during 1974 and 1975, providing for expansion of crude oil supply to India over the next five years and, extensive Iranian credit facilities to cover imports from that state." [Ref 37:p.32] In addition, Iraqi, assistance with a loan of \$110 million for crude imports during the same time period helped India meet the increased demands. "A number of other agreements were also signed...including ones to supply 30 million tons of crude oil to India to the proposed refinery at Mathura, and exchange of consultancy services between Engineers India Limited and the Iraqi petroleum industry." [Ref 37:p.33] Though seriously affected by the four-fold increase in oil prices, New Delhi supported the increase "as this was quite consistent with the general tenor of India's policy which has supported the rights of states to exercise full sovereign control over their natural resources." [Ref 37:p.32] India's backing of "...the action taken by OPEC at the CIES conference at Paris was appreciated, and created a favorable condition for bilateral negotiation with friendly oil-producing countries, for an assured supply of crude and long-term credits." [Ref 37:p.32] Prior to the invasion, India imported some 40%-50% of its annual requirement--half of that from Iraq and Kuwait.

In addition to oil for its economy, the Middle East has been an important outlet for bilateral trade for Indian consumer goods and accounts for about 7 percent of India's total foreign trade. These countries "...also provide an outlet for the export of Indian engineering

products, technical know-how (Iraq and Libya in particular) and manpower." [Ref 37:p.33] As an example, over 50 percent of Indian construction projects in foreign countries take place in Iraq.

The 1.2 million Indians in the Gulf provide billions of dollars annually in remittances to India. These individuals are of utmost importance to the Indian Government as implied from India's deployment of the INS GODAVARI in 1986 off the coast of South Yemen in response to an attempted coup and escalation of violence resulting in the deaths of thousands of people. "The government's intention was to try to assist some 5000 Indian nationals working in South Yemen...and...reflected India's desire to show that it has a legitimate interest in events taking place in Western Asia and Arabia." [Ref 5:p.15] The majority of the Indians in the Gulf countries are laborers, but there are also many professionals and businessmen. The Indians have not only vastly contributed to the economic development of the host nationals but also helped in building cultural and sports ties contributing to the strengthening of links between India and the Middle East. There were approximately 200,000 Indians in Iraq and Kuwait--mostly in Kuwait--at the time of the invasion.

On a much broader level, stability in the Middle East is a vital security interest to India. Islamic-inspired problems in the Gulf region can easily spill over into the sub-continent. For example, the Afghan conflict has had an important effect on the fighting in Kashmir. Some Kashmir militants reportedly began fighting in Afghanistan in the 1980's and have since played an important role in the latest uprisings in Kashmir. The fear of exacerbating already tense Hindu-Muslim relations



or creation of an Islamic upheaval in India are further reasons to fear continued Islamic unrest in the Middle East.

Escalating tensions in the Gulf region have always preceded the build up of foreign forces in the region. India's long standing desire to rid the Indian ocean and Persian Gulf of foreign power naval forces--in order to increase her own influence--has not come to fruition due to a Western need to prevent Soviet influence in the Gulf region. However, more recently the interest has been more to prevent any disruption of vital oil lanes by regional adversaries. India's role in protection of these vital shipping lanes has been suppressed by an unwillingness to participate in an alliance in support of Western needs [Ref 38]. Additionally, she has lacked the support of the U.S. and Gulf countries.

India's more recently acquired naval strength and the ending of the cold war should provide a better opportunity and less reluctance to partake in a security role in the Gulf since this role would not be based upon protection of Western interests vs. the Eastern Bloc countries. While India's positions on the Gulf crisis has left India isolated in the region, eventual acquiescence from Gulf nations with much weaker naval forces and a U.S. forced to reduce its peacetime deployments due to fiscal constraints make this position a serious possibility. However, it is a vital necessity that India strengthen her foundations in South Asia before attempting to broaden her role into the Gulf region. Western and Middle Eastern doubts about India's ability to effectively secure shipping lanes in the Gulf will increase if she must continuously focus on regional and domestic issues.

As part of its security interest, India has blamed the arms race in the Indian Ocean on the influx of U.S. weapons into the region. While attempting to maintain weapons superiority over Pakistan and balance the Chinese threat, India has been persistent in trying to block weapons sales and foreign influence to regional countries--especially Pakistan. However, India's ability to prevent sales to Middle Eastern countries is both limited and would contradict her attempts to improve ties in the region.

India's Post-Gulf-War attempts to impress upon the U.S. the need to limit access to weapons by newly formed U.S. allies is in vain. While perception of an actual military threat from the Gulf region is currently limited, a massive influx of sophisticated hardware which could make its way into Pakistan--especially in view of India's current image in the region--could have long term implications for India. Additionally, the emergence of longer range missiles into the Gulf region make it a necessity for India to carefully examine her own capabilities, underscored by a realization of a desire to increase her position in South Asia and the effect which new weapons systems can have on her South Asian neighbors.

India's actions and position toward events in the Gulf during the crisis only partially reflected the concerns outlined above. Though India's stance on the crisis gradually shifted from an equivocal statement to strong condemnation, she has been criticized internally and internationally for the weakness of her initial position. The following section of the thesis will examine India's actions and stance on the crisis and how her stance changed as the crisis unfolded.

While explanations as to why the Indian Government chose the path that it did will be discussed in the next chapter, essential to understanding her positions and her actions during the crisis is the realization that she was being led by an unstable minority Government coalition, whose every action could create reason for one or all members of the coalition to withdraw their support. In addition the presence of a large, though minority, Muslim population in India, for years in the midst of communal violence, forced the government to be careful in its approach to the developing crisis in the Gulf, for fear of fueling an already tense situation.

#### **B. INDIA'S ACTIONS IN THE GULF**

As the Gulf crisis began to unfold, New Delhi's policy for dealing with it developed into a 3 point plan of action. "One, to explore ways to de-escalate the situation, created by Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and subsequent events, two, to ensure the safety of Indians in Kuwait and Iraq and, three, to find ways out of the difficulties, to be created by international sanctions against Iraq." [Ref 39] The understanding of the severity of the situation to India is evidenced by the immediate trips abroad by the Indian foreign minister Inder Kumar Gujral and Indian efforts to "...explore the possibility of convening a U.N. security council meeting to find solutions to ease...." the economic burden on countries as a result of the sanctions on Iraq. [Ref 39]

India did very little with regard to the first element of her plan. Though Indian papers lauded India's NAM initiatives and the Foreign Minister I.K. Gujral's visits abroad to find a solution to the crisis, little was reported in the international press and her efforts were, needless to say, unproductive. While the Foreign Minister's trip to the USSR resulted in a joint communique declaring the need to defuse the crisis peacefully and fearing the build up of foreign forces in the region--it did nothing to help resolve the crisis. Discussions with US officials regarding Indian efforts to mediate in the crisis is doubtful as Gujral stated on 16 August in Washington that "...the focus of the discussion he had with Mr. Baker was on the problems faced by the large number of Indian Nationals working in...." the Gulf and explaining "...to the U.S. Secretary of State the economic problems faced by India following the Gulf crisis." [Ref 40]

Before returning to India, Gujral went to Baghdad to discuss "every aspect of the problems of the Indians in Iraq and Kuwait...." with Iraq officials. [Ref 41] Briefing parliament upon his return to India, he told a packed parliament that "India has ruled out any mediatory or good offices role for herself in the Crisis and the primary reason for his tour was to ensure the welfare, security and well being of the large Indian Community in the Gulf." [Ref 42] Additionally, he told both houses that the U.S. would not stand in the way of efforts to dispatch humanitarian supplies to Indian and other third world nationals in the region and "He expressed fears that countries like, Pakistan and Bangladesh, who have decided to send troops to the area, may use it as an excuse for further militarizing themselves. [Ref 42]

Gujral's rush trip to the USSR implies an unwillingness by India to accept the Soviets fall from superpower status. The joint communique resulting from that trip implies an obvious fear by both nations of the presence of massive U.S. forces so near to their respective borders. In addition, India surely realized its position was being viewed as pro Iraqi and attempted to give it credibility by turning to her long time friends in Russia to ensure that they, at least, would not turn against her. Gujral's visits to the US and Iraq were taken on the premise to ensure the safety and security of the Indians in Kuwait and to ensure the world understood how India would be economically affected by the embargo and the rise in oil prices.

India pushed a peace proposal through the NAM in the later stages of the crisis but to little avail. In reality one must question the ability of the NAM to do anything to help resolve this issue. Both Iraq and Kuwait are members of the NAM and other member countries like Egypt and Algeria were so divided on the issue to give a NAM proposal any credibility. Additionally, the current chairman Yugoslavia was demonstrating a high degree of ambivalence as it faced its own internal problems. [Ref 43] Furthermore, the crisis had the full attention of the United Nations--a world body having no success in defusing the situation.

The time for NAM to act was prior to the invasion--after which it was fruitless--as the crisis turned into an international problem vice merely a regional one. India's desire to use NAM to help resolve the crisis was based on her historical leadership role in that organization. However, India's image in NAM was severely damaged after its position on the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and recent decline of U.S.-Soviet

relations has had many NAM members questioning the organizations utility.

[Ref 44]

India's action to ensure the safety of her countrymen in the Gulf were unparalleled. The Indian Government--under a great deal of pressure from parliamentary groups and other state governments--focused its attention on taking care of its citizens. She embarked upon a two-pronged approach--the first to establish a plan to help repatriate as many citizens as possible, and the second, to gain permission from the UN to send food and medicine to help alleviate the sufferings caused by shortages and Iraqi refusal to provide for the many Indians and other Third World Nationals in the region.

India was very successful in repatriating its citizens from Iraq and Kuwait. She was able to obtain permission to conduct air, sea, and land operations to evacuate Indians from the Gulf. She proceeded to evacuate some 150,000 to 170,000 Indians--almost all of those desiring to leave the region. According to Indian diplomats in late November 1990 in Baghdad "only 20,000 Indians remained in Kuwait, with 5,000 still in Iraq." [Ref 45] The Indians had conducted one of the greatest airlifts since the Berlin blockade and undoubtedly did more for its citizens in the Gulf than any other nations with masses of people in the region.

[Ref 46]

Indian efforts to send food and medicine to the Gulf were also a success. Direct requests were made to the U.N. security council members after Iraq stated early September, it would no longer provide food to the East Asians in the region. [Ref 47] After days of deliberation, the Security Council agreed to the Indian request as long as items "...be

provided through the United Nations in cooperation with International Committee of Red Cross or other appropriate humanitarian agencies."

[Ref 48]

Iraq tried very hard to make the Indian effort look like a breach of the UN sanctions by claiming it would only allow the Indian ship into Kuwait on a bilateral basis and if food distribution was handled by Indian authorities. [Ref 49] India successfully sidestepped this attempt by ensuring the presence of Indian Red Cross officials aboard the ship, carrying 10,000 tons of food and medicine, which docked in Kuwait in late September. Having off-loaded half its cargo, Iraq tried again to sabotage India's action by refusing to allow the ship to depart without turning over the remainder of its cargo to Iraqi authorities. India's outright refusal, until authorization was given by the UN, demonstrated India's support of the UN sanctions against Iraq.

India's attempts to ensure the safety and security of its citizens can be linked to her soft initial position against Iraq--though publicly denied by Indian officials--which cost her heavily in the international arena. However, regardless of the cost, her actions in this regard were quite exemplary. It is interesting to note that the concern for Indians in the Gulf was evident throughout the nation. Strong cries for the Government to take immediate and overt action to aid its citizens in the Gulf emanated from all sectors of Indian society. Some parliamentary groups observed a day long fast in mid-August to demonstrate their anxiety over the cause of the Indians in the Gulf--most notably was the opposition members of the Congress Party--likely more of a political maneuver by Rajiv Gandhi than a sign of real concern. [Ref 50]

The third area of Indian actions was to attempt to correct Indian economic problems caused by the invasion and subsequent embargo. The stoppage of oil exports from Iraq and Kuwait--which were contracted to supply 2.25 and 1.5 million tons respectively, as well as 4.5 million tons of Iraqi crude diverted to India from the Soviets, of India's 18.5 million ton requirement for the fiscal year--forced her to seek other sources of crude. At the beginning of the crisis, India had received less than half of the oil contracted from Kuwait and Iraq. By the end of August she had signed term contracts with other oil producing nations--including Saudi Arabia, Iran, Malaysia and Bahrain--to offset the distribution of supplies from Iraq and Kuwait. Crude started arriving with only a two week gap in shipments. [Ref 51]

Another oil related problem, though not linked to the Gulf Crisis, was a disruption of the flow of crude from the oil fields in upper Assam. Students demanding implementation of the Assam accord and cancellation of the construction of a loop crude oil pipeline caused the disruption of crude to some of the Indian refineries. [Ref 52]

While the oil exporting countries of the world were relishing in rising oil prices and were quick to come to India's aid in supplying oil to meet her shortages--the higher prices of oil on the world market created havoc with India's already fragile foreign exchange situation. India, like many other countries, was forced to cut back on other imports and apply measures to reduce consumption. For example, the government banned the use of official vehicles once a week and put a tax on all oil products except for kerosene. The increased cost placed an estimated



additional two billion dollar burden on foreign exchange holdings for 1990 compared to 1989. [Ref 53]

The Indian economy was also hampered by the forced reduction in exports to the Gulf. Indian exports to Iraq and Kuwait amounted to some \$300 million annually and Iraq owes India \$800 million for completed construction projects which had a potential for higher future revenue. In addition, remittances of between 500 and 600 million dollars from Indians in Iraq and Kuwait completely stopped and frightened Indian citizens throughout the entire region were quitting their jobs and returning home. To make matters worse, the Indian government spared no expense in airlifting Indian citizens out of the region eventually running up a massive bill. All in all, the total effects upon the Indian economy were estimated at four billion dollars, an expense the economy with a massive foreign debt load and sizeable internal budget deficit could hardly afford. [Ref 53]

In an effort to help alleviate the financial crunch, India sought and obtained an IMF loan of \$1.8 billion. While it appears that there were no strings attached to this loan it is possible that the speed with which it was granted could be linked to overflight and refueling rights allowed to U.S. transport aircraft on the basis of bilateral U.S.-Indo relations. Though there is no documented proof of this linkage the fact that India had granted refueling rights to the U.S. and given the U.S.'s voting power in the IMF make this a feasible suggestion.

India's accession to a non permanent seat on the 12 member security council in January 1991 gave a perfect opportunity for the country to play a role in security council decisions, yet no vote was forthcoming

until after the war was completed. In the interim, India pushed for a cessation of hostilities--realistically more of an attempt by the new government to bring India back to the surface in the international arena than any expectation of success. This is evidenced by answers of the Indian Ambassador to the U.N., C. R. Gharekhan, to questions asked by Pat Buchanan and Mike Kinsley on CNN's Crossfire on 26 February 1991.

Portions of the discussions are shown below:

Kinsley:...In the opinion of the United Nations Security Council, how does Saddam Hussein end the war against him.

Amb. Gharekhan: The efforts of some countries, Soviet Union, India and a few others, over the last 48 hours have been to secure total and unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait in accordance with Security Council resolution 660--at the same time to prevent as much as possible loss of life, loss of property on all sides, not just Iraqi but Iraqi, Kuwait, American, and others.

Buchanan: This is not January 15th, it is now February 25 or 26th I believe. India and the Soviet Union do not have troops in battle. The Americans do, the French do, the British do, the Egyptians do. Since you're not bearing the burden of battle, why should the United States and its coalition partners, now that the war has begun listen to what New Delhi has to say rather than what they want to achieve?... What is wrong with the people who are fighting the battle deciding how it should end?

Amb. Gharkhan: I think Washington should listen to New Delhi and Moscow and several other capitals for the simple reason that we are in the Security Council. It is the Security Council which has authorized the use of force and therefore the Security Council has every Locus Tendi in this matter.

Buchanan: Mr. Ambassador, the United States, Britain, and France, I believe, all have veto power in the Security Council. They can block any kind of resolution which suggests that they ought not to do something they want to do. As a practical matter, isn't the authority you're trying to express here simply not much more than the opinion and perhaps the moral authority of the Indian government?

Amb. Gharekhan: Well, it is true that we don't have veto power and the veto powers can block anything which they don't like. This is a fact of life. We have to live with it but that does not mean

that countries like mine which are members of the Security Council, we have been elected by the General Assembly of the United Nations. We have a moral obligation to ourselves and to the international community. [Ref 54:p.5-6]

The ambassador's comments clearly indicate a realization by India of its limited ability to force a cessation of hostilities and thus implies an attempt to improve its image amongst the international community.

### C. INDIA'S STAND ON THE CRISIS

While India's actions in the Gulf crisis were of limited concern to the international effort against Iraq--with the exception of her desire to send humanitarian supplies to the region--her stance on the crisis caused an uproar throughout the world. There is one specific factor or event which can be viewed as a turning point in India's position on the crisis--a point in time in mid-October when the majority of the Indians in the crisis zone had been evacuated. After this time India's stand on Iraqi's invasion went from an equivocal position to clear condemnation of Iraqi action. This section will examine India's stance on the crisis and how it changed at the period indicated.

India's initial position on the Iraqi invasion was that "she is opposed to the use of force in any form between the two countries. India hoped that Iraq would soon withdraw its troops from Kuwait." [Ref 55] This position was indicative of India's belief that her close ties with both Iraq and Kuwait--much closer with Iraq--required her to be measured in her public statements and that the "...conflict was complex and India

should act tactfully." [Ref 56] The complexities for India in this crisis were many--the safety of her citizens, her long standing friendship with Iraq to name only a few--and at the same time, India was caught between appeasing the international community and preventing the alienation of the only country in the region who had consistently stood by her on the Kashmir issue. Thus she took a position that did not clearly place her on either side of the conflict.

Building on her initial stance, VP Singh stated on 17 August that India's position on Gulf event has three basic elements--"opposition to the use of force in relations between states, support to the UN response and disapproval of unilateral action, not mandated by the world body." [Ref 56] India stood by its initial position, even in the face of heavy criticism from Western and Arab countries, claiming that New Delhi was following a policy that conformed to its national interest and that "...it had expressed firm views on the annexation of Kuwait, and had given unswerving, unequivocal support to all five security council resolutions in the wake of recent developments in the Gulf." [Ref 57] Indian officials used this particular quote as a crutch to support India's position against Iraq's invasion. However, support of the UN resolutions did not condemn Iraq's actions--it only agreed to support resolutions which India knew would not have been in her best interests to attempt to defy.

India's position that it was opposed to the use of force among nations is at best an attempt to justify her inactive role in the crisis. Since few nations in the world support military conflict over diplomacy, it is questionable if this position is even worth examination. Yet if

viewed from the fact that India has participated in various conflicts over the past 40 years it is hypocritical. However, more careful examination shows an India willing to act militarily only in the context of South Asia and in view of what New Delhi saw as an attempt to subvert its influence in that region. India's strong positions against the U.S. in Korea, Vietnam, and Libya as well as condemnation of Israeli actions in 1973, are examples of her positions on conflicts outside the region. Additionally, despite India's unwillingness to publicly condemn the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, it is no secret that privately Indira Gandhi strongly expressed her distaste of Moscow's actions. This issue must also be examined from India's strong relations with the Soviets--as she had with Iraq--and the Soviets aid to her military development. Hence, this position on the Gulf crisis should have been expected.

In the same vein, Mr. I. K. Gujral's statement that "India was not sending troops to the area because it was part of its foreign policy not to commit troops outside" [Ref 39] is also an attempt to justify her inaction and to possibly link it with some other nations who did not respond militarily due to constitutional constraints. This position must also be viewed from a South Asian perspective. Additionally, this policy needs to be examined in light of India's recent withdrawal from Sri Lanka as well as a possible changing foreign policy towards events outside of South Asia, both of these issues will be discussed in the final chapter.

India's insistence that a peaceful solution was the only way to resolve the crisis is directly linked to the realization that her economy was being stifled by events in the Gulf. If peacefully resolved, her people would be able to remain in the Gulf and remittances would begin to

flow--it was not an admission that she was against the use of force--only that it be under the auspices of the U.N. This was also an indication of how disturbing India found the sudden massive buildup of U.S. led forces in the region--especially at a time when Moscow was showing less personal interest in being involved. This fear must be viewed in the light of the United States' world policeman role--a role that India would not be apt to accept as it sees itself in that position in the Indian Ocean.

As the numbers of Indians in the Gulf area decreased and reality of Iraq's two faced approach to the assurances given to India regarding Indian citizens in the region, [Ref 58] India "...made what is by far the most clear and apparently final position on the Gulf crisis." [Ref 59] Mr. Gujral's trip to the UAE--the Gulf country with closest ties to India--was picked as the place to clarify the concerns of many Gulf nations of India's perceived position on the crisis. In a prepared statement, he said:

We believe that states have the right to take steps that are necessary, in order to defend themselves... India supported the early convening of an international conference (for West Asia) to resolve other outstanding issues...While we recognize the complexities of the situation, we hope that there will be a peaceful solution in the interest of all. [Ref 59]

The implications of this statement were a far flung change in India's foreign policy towards the crisis. The "steps necessary" are obviously militaristic and are an acceptance of the US-led presence in the region--one which India has never supported in the past. The second portion is a clear unwillingness to link the Iraqi pullout with the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, though still expressing support for

The creation of Palestine. "Recognizing complexities" is a realization that it may not be possible to find a peaceful solution to the crisis and force would be supported if necessary. [Ref 59]

The Indian foreign policy was finally beginning to take shape. Officially, India "...rejected any insinuation of opportunism or expediency linking earlier positions to the fact that Indian Nationals were stranded in Iraq and Kuwait." [Ref 59] However, as stated by one Indian Diplomat,

No government in a democracy, especially one in a see-saw at home can afford to ignore this aspect. I don't know if we want to say more than what has been said but we cannot risk (the Iraqi President) Mr Saddam Hussein's unpredictability. Look at what is happening to some others. [Ref 44]

This last comment is in reference to reports of Iraqi actions toward citizens of other Asian countries who were posed against Iraq in support of the coalition. Though India had been assured of special treatment of her citizens by Iraqi officials, later reports clearly indicated that this hope was seriously misguided. However, regardless of India's unwillingness to officially accept this claim, the fact remains that India's stronger positions came to surface only after the number of Indians was drastically reduced and though this was not the sole reason for India's initial stand, it likely weighed most heavily upon the minds of India's political elite.

The changing Indian position on the Gulf crisis was more in line with the majority of the international community. However, the Government's problems on the home front were escalating beyond control and within

three weeks of India's bolder stance, the VP Singh government was dissolved and Chandra Shekhar was inducted as India's next Prime Minister on 10 November 1990.

It is interesting to note that in the past after taking office, all Indian Prime Ministers have initially focussed their attentions on foreign affairs--whether as a need to project their international influence and prestige or a real necessity due to circumstances in the world. Chandra Shekhar, for both of these reasons, turned his initial attentions to India's foreign policy.

The realization that attempting to solve India's internal problems was both nearly impossible and could easily result in his demise, forced him to try and bring India back into the forefront in the international arena in order to improve his chances of maintaining his hold on the Prime Ministership. Additionally, Congress leader, Rajiv Gandhi had heavily criticized VP Singh for allowing India to "...become a nonentity in international affairs." (Ref 60) The fact that Shekhar's position was based on support from the Congress Party was further justification for attempting to tackle foreign policy issues. His trip and statements at the SAARC conference in November 1991--a trip which many in India expected would be cancelled due to internal problems--was considered a big success with regards to improving India's relations with her South Asian neighbors, and in the push for making SAARC a stronger organization.

On the Gulf, the new prime minister continued with the latest policies established by the preceding government. He stated that Mr. Saddam Hussein "...should have responded more favorably to the U.S. offer



of negotiating after the U.N. Security Council set a deadline for Iraq to vacate Kuwait, failing which all measures, including war, would be legitimate against Iraq." [Ref 61] This was by far the strongest and the "...first outright criticism of Iraq by India." [Ref 61] The new Prime Minister also concurred with the refusal to "linkage", while at the same time still supporting an eventual solution to the Palestinian problem.

India's permission for U.S. aircraft to be refuelled at Bombay's International Airport can be seen as test of both India's relations with the U.S. and its new policy on the Gulf crisis. Shekhar's refusal to end the refueling and risk losing the support of the Congress Party are evidence of his resolve to see the Iraqi's ousted from Kuwait. In addition, Shekhar was trying to assure the world that he was not a puppet of the Congress Party and while he only had full support of 54 members of parliament, he fully intended to take action independently of the Congress Party's wishes. He was pressured by Congress leader, Rajiv Gandhi, to end the refueling as Gandhi saw it against India's non-alignment policy. However, this was seen in India as a clear attempt by Gandhi to prevent Shekhar from gaining too much respect and popular support for his success in India's foreign arena.

Despite heavy criticism, Shekhar did not officially withdraw the refueling rights granted to the U.S. "The USA has decided to make alternate arrangements for transit halt and refueling of its transport aircraft flying to and from the Gulf" [Ref 62] effective 20 February 1991. As stated by Mr. William Clark, U.S. Ambassador to India, Washington appreciated India's Gulf position and "...had no desire to cause any domestic friction over the issue of refueling facilities for

its aircraft." [Ref 62] At a time when Indo-U.S. relations are on an upswing, this act demonstrates the strength of these relations and a realization by the U.S. administration of the complexities of current Indian political situation.

It is unfair to only assess India on the basis of her stand after the change over in government. This period in Indian foreign policy was wrought with strong undertones of policy formulation based purely on political aspirations and moves by opposing parties. This is clearly evidenced by Shekhar's attempted unwillingness to bend to Congress' wishes and specifically his sudden unexpected resignation though Congress had not pulled support for his party. Additionally, certain initiatives undertaken by Congress party members at Rajiv's request were an attempt to demonstrate Shekhar's limited power without his support, as well as, to show Shekhar who was really in charge.

In summary, India's stand on the Gulf crisis evolved around its own self interest. A hope that she could prevent endangering her citizens in the Gulf resulted in India's policy being quite indulgent to the Iraqi regime. At the same time India saw itself between a need to assure the safety of her citizens and to appease the international system by denouncing Iraq's actions. While there are other reasons for these positions--which will be discussed in the next chapter--the most crucial to the development of her policy was presence of such a large number of Indians in the Gulf region.

#### IV. REASONS FOR INDIA'S REACTIONS TO THE GULF CRISIS

In discussing reasons for India's positions toward the Gulf crisis, one must keep from viewing it only from a Western perspective. As the U.S. viewed India's non-alignment position as a pro-communist stance in the beginning of the cold war, it would be too simple to identify her initial positions in the Gulf crisis as pro-Iraqi. It is too easy to make the claim that India was on the wrong side of the coalition and supportive of Iraq's invasion due to her initial stance on the crisis; that her initial unwillingness to condemn Iraq and lack of a military effort on the side of the coalition means she cannot be trusted to uphold the international laws she repeatedly espouses. Hence, it is necessary to carefully examine her positions in order to identify expectations of India's future role in the region.

India's actions in this crisis must be viewed from her own self-interest. As history has shown, her policies across the board show a clear tendency to take action in that light on all issues--with much disregard for the desires of the international community. With this in mind, many would criticize India's non-involvement as a weakness due to her desires for a greater regional role in the Indian Ocean and repeated attempts to keep the superpowers out of the region. Both of these--especially the first--may have been facilitated by a strong Indian military effort preempting the U.S. response. Whether or not this is a feasible suggestion is highly questionable and will be briefly examined later.

One cannot fault India for standing up for its right to decide issues based upon self-interest. All nations have that right and most expressed it during this crisis. Some nations leaders defied the will of their people by taking sides based on a hope for future personal prestige or economic and military assistance. This was clearly obvious in the "participation" in the military effort by countries like Turkey and Pakistan. Both countries faced crucial internal political and public dissension directly resulting from their positions on the Gulf crisis and their gains will likely be limited--especially Pakistan's.

Regarding the U.S. participation it would be quite easy to visualize an administration in the U.S. that would not have taken such a strong position in the crisis--especially had there not been oil in Kuwait. In addition, would Washington's refusal to allow aggression have been as strong if the Chinese had annexed Bhutan or Nepal? It is difficult to envision a military force of 500 thousand U.S. servicemen being deployed to force the Chinese out of one of these nations--even if requested by one of the other countries in the region.

This thesis does not attempt to place blame upon any facet of the Indian administration for its positions, it seeks only to examine reasons, for the positions she expressed. While many nations have faulted India for the elusiveness of her initial stand on Iraq's aggression, as well as the see-saw of her policies regarding refueling of U.S. aircraft, this chapter attempts to show that her initial position was in line with her national interests and the issue of refueling developed into a political game by India's "two" Prime Ministers and any

judgement based on that issue must be underscored with an understanding of the political situation.

India's unwillingness to accept criticism of her positions is in keeping with her staunch refusal to allow her policies to be determined from abroad. However, Gujral's rejection of a suggestion in the early phase of the conflict from the parliament that India's Prime Minister should personally contact Saddam Hussein, for fear that Hussein would want to know India's position on the invasion, clearly implies an understanding in India about how questionable its position was being viewed abroad, as well as, what her true position was regarding the invasion. Additionally, her strong support of the U.N. sanctions and continuous enunciation of this fact expresses a hope that the international community would realize the negative ramifications for India of an outright condemnation of Iraq--yet at the same time accept that she was against and did not recognize Iraq's annexation of Kuwait. There are as many reasons for India to have participated militarily in this conflict and initially condemned the invasion as there are for her eventual actions.

This chapter will focus on the following areas and attempt to explain how each played a part in Indian policy formulation towards the Gulf crisis.

- Indian Government
- Hindu-Muslim Problems
- Historical Position on the Arab World
- India vs Pakistan
- Globalism vs Regionalism
- Indian Military
- India and the Soviet Union

## A. INDIAN GOVERNMENT

A full discussion of Indian politics is beyond the scope of this chapter. This section will briefly examine the change of governments from the Congress Party to the coalition government and how this change has affected Indian foreign policy.

The Congress Party has ruled India for the majority of time since its independence. It was only natural that this party and its leader Nehru--in the forefront of Indian independence--take the helm in 1947. Though opposition to Congress rule has been growing since the 1950's, it has had limited influence due to an inability of the opposition forces to solve disputes between themselves. The passing of the bat in Congress has only been interrupted for a brief period in the late 70's. This followed a disgruntled two year period, from 1975 to 1977, of emergency rule established by Indira Gandhi due to a rise in militancy and a perceived threat to her power. Indira's return to power in 1980 was facilitated by the inability of the coalition to effectively face internal issues and a high degree of factionalism within the coalition. The wave of sympathy following her assassination in October 1984 led to a sweeping victory for Rajiv Gandhi, whom many hoped would lead India into the 21st century.

Rajiv's administration was able to claim some successes in the international arena. He was lauded for India's intervention in the Maldives to put down an attempted coup, and gained international prestige for India's role in Sri Lanka--though that has proved to be somewhat of a military failure for India. However, he failed to improve much on the

home front. His attempts to play power politics, like his mother, resulted in further alienation of the opposition and much back stabbing within his party. The blackening of Rajiv's "Mr. Clean" image came in 1987 as a result of discovery of "kickbacks amounting to 300 million rupees (approximately \$25 million) in a defense deal" from the Bofors Company of Sweden. [Ref 63:p.119] Bofors, which had won a contract to sell howitzers to India, is reported to have paid large sums to public officials in India--even possibly the Prime Minister. Concerned over increasing corruption within the Congress party, Singh resigned as India's Defense Minister. Suddenly he became "the symbol of integrity, the guardian and upholder of public norms, and a possible alternative to Rajiv Gandhi." [Ref 63:p.119] The evidence of this--though not the only issue--became a reality as Congress party was unable to achieve a majority in the 1989 election and turned over power to the Coalition of the National Front Government.

The coalition of the Centrist National Front government--of three specific parties--was masterminded by VP Singh as a viable alternative to the corrupt Congress party. Only winning 142 of a total of 529 seats, less than the 196 seats won by Congress, the National Front Government required the support of two ideologically diverse parties-- the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Communist Party of India Marxist (CPIM)--to form a Government. Though these two gave their support to the National Front they did not expressly become a part of the National Front Alliance. This is likely due to an unwillingness to join a government which includes the other. Thus the three parties, "...united mainly by their antipathy to Rajiv Gandhi and their calculation that a stint in

power, or near power, will bolster their future electoral prospects," [Ref 22:p.18] made their unity very fragile at best. As recent history indicated, these groups were able to put aside their differences long enough to put the government in the history books, but as the coalition government which held power from 1977-1979, the trouble started almost from the very day it officially took power.

This government was doomed to fail. The inability to take a stand on any issue without fearing a loss of support from one or both of its factions made the government truly unable to take positions with confidence of at least majority support. It required her to carefully step around issues such that she would appease all factions of the coalition. This was specifically evidenced by the heat the Prime Minister took on both the Ayooda Temple issue <sup>6</sup> and the job reservation issue. <sup>7</sup> The uproar created in parliament over these two issues crossed all party lines and are both linked to the governments downfall.

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<sup>6</sup> This issue is at the center of communal problems in India today. The Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masjid shrine is a mosque built by the first Mughal emperor, Babur, in the 16th century. It is built at the birthplace of the Indian Lord Rama, and Hindu's claim that the mosque was built by demolishing the temple. The issue has repeatedly surfaced over the past 350 years as Hindu's attempt to have the temple rebuilt. The recent push by Hindu fundamentalist groups to have the temple rebuilt by destroying the mosque. The government's inability to find an acceptable solution to the problem has allowed it to develop into a major political issue. For a better account, see United News of India, UNI Backgrounder, vol. 12, no. 11, 12 March 1987 and vol. 14, no. 40, 5 October 1989.

<sup>7</sup> The job reservation issue is India's attempt at equal opportunity. The implementation of a program to reserve a larger percentage of government jobs for lower class Indians. There is an acceptance by all government parties for the need of this legislation, however the actual percentages of jobs and who they apply to it at question.



The invasion of Kuwait came at an inopportune moment for India's government. The Prime Minister was faced with crucial problems at home which could at any time have caused him his office. Hence the burden for shouldering India's foreign policy towards the Gulf was placed in the hands of the foreign minister I. K. Gujral. Realizing that the problems on the home front were escalating beyond control, Gujral took action that would keep from further upsetting the delicate situation and if possible help the government stay in power. Hence the dramatic efforts by India to ensure the safety, well being, and evacuation of its citizens in the Gulf. This was the issue most crucial to the parliament regarding the Gulf crisis evidenced by the number of "walkouts" by various parliamentary personnel on various occasions in response to perceived deficiencies in the governments actions in this regard.

The belief that Iraq was a good friend to India and the statements by Iraq that it would aid the Indians in the region helped justify India's soft position at the onset of the crisis. That concern over the Indians in the region was paramount in the desires of the parliamentary members is evidenced from the cheering that Gujral received after informing the parliament of his actions regarding the safety of Indians in the Gulf during his trips to Moscow, Washington, and Baghdad. There were no members of parliament criticizing the government for not condemning Iraq's invasion with the exception of opposition leader, Rajiv Gandhi, who repeatedly made attempts to improve his own image at the expense of the incumbent party. However, as previously discussed, as the realities of Iraqi concern about the Indians in the Gulf began to surface, and the number of Indians in the region began to decline, Indian criticism

Iraq became stronger but the government's inability to stay in power preempted what might have resulted in a token military contribution or medical unit, indicative of India's true feelings on the act of aggression. Her policies from that point on were reduced to a political struggle between two individuals competing for power and personal prestige.

After the government's fall, Gandhi countered the president's request that he attempt to form a government by committing his support to Chandra Shekhar--who had split from the National Front government. Gandhi claimed an unwillingness to form a government without the people's mandate. Yet, his hesitation is realistically viewed as an attempt to prevent from further damaging his image by showing his ineptness at handling the issues which had brought down VP Singh. Shekhar's attempts to bring India back into the forefront in international affairs and continuing the policies that Gujral had established failed due to Gandhi's actions. Specifically the refueling issue, which was greatly appreciated by the U.S. and its allies--including the Arab countries--was a perfect opportunity for India to remove any doubts about its stand on Iraq's aggression. However, Gandhi's repeated calls for a cessation of refueling activities, on the basis that it violated India's non-alignment policy, ended up alienating the Arab governments--although it appears that the West, especially the U.S., has realized the political complexities surrounding the issue.

Though Gandhi did not pull his support for Shekhar, he attempted to use the basis of his support to pull the strings to make the Prime Minister abide by his wishes. Shekhar's surprise resignation clearly

indicated his unwillingness to be forced to play the game as a puppet. Gandhi's actions may cause the Congress party some problems in the coming election as the reasons for his actions are publicized.

Elected Governments--regardless of their position on the ideological spectrum--all have the similar goal of improving the lot of their people and increasing the prestige of their country. The coalition created by VP Singh was not ideologically different in its views from the Congress party. Nor were the members of the coalition divided in their ultimate goals. What prevented the success of the coalition in its actions revolved around personality problems and attempts by members of the government to gain the "political edge" in their play for more power.

As Pakistan and India were unable to put aside their regional problems in view of an international crisis, so were power hungry Indian politicians unable to put aside their personal ambitions to work towards the greater common good of all India. The leaders of the coalition took steps towards the Gulf to prevent the coalition's downfall--which eventually occurred, but not as a direct result of India's Gulf stance--and to maintain stability in the country.

Since it is difficult to blame political leaders for wanting to stay in power, it is hard to fault the VP Singh government for its position in the Gulf. While direct action in the Gulf may have improved India's security role in the Indian Ocean, it may have also exacerbated internal and regional problems which are of utmost importance to India's populous and definitely more crucial to maintaining the government's power. A political leader in India with more support in parliament would have been able to take a stand on a broader level and as previous Indian

governments have done, balance the attention given to internal and external problems--but that was not the case during the Gulf crisis and hence the issue of international prestige and India's world image did not likely play a big part in the policy making of India's political elite.

## **B. HINDU-MUSLIM PROBLEMS**

Though considered a secular society--where all religions are free to live and prosper--India has been plagued with years of communal violence, especially between Hindus and Muslims. Islam first arrived in India in the 8th century, brought by Arab traders and marauders from the Middle East. In the eyes of these invaders, the Hindu's were infidels "...whose only options were Islam or death." [Ref 64:p.27] India spent many centuries under Islamic rule of the Mughal Emperors. The manner by which many Hindu's were forced to convert and the attempts by some to regain power in various stages in India is evidence of the deep seated problems between these two religious groups. Current problems between the two developed in the early 1900's as the Muslim leaders in India began to envision a separate state of Pakistan for Indian Muslims. This dream became a reality during the British withdrawal from the subcontinent in 1947.

The creation of Pakistan has been the underlying cause for the present day Muslim-Hindu problems in India. The mass exodus of Hindu's from Pakistan and Muslims from India following Independence in 1947 was

wrought with extreme violence as many were killed on the roads between the two countries. The two nations have fought two wars in 1947 and in 1965 over Kashmir--a Muslim majority state which acceded to India after independence. Both countries have expended vast amounts of financial and material assets attempting to counter one another. Both--especially Pakistan--have allowed their foreign policies to be largely a reaction to positions taken by the other.

Pakistan's refusal to accept that Kashmir is a part of India is partly to support its claim that Muslims cannot live in a Hindu majority nation and thus justify its reasons for existence. Conversely, India cannot allow the loss of Kashmir for it would refute its position that she is a secular nation, as well as increase secessionist desires in other states in the country. These ideological differences between the two nations have carried over into internal problems for India.

India's internal Muslim problems have been many. Successive governments have had to step carefully around Muslim issues in order to ensure keeping the Muslim vote. Religion has gradually become a greater part of electoral politics as different factions vie for support based on religious differences. Multiple concessions made to Muslim fundamentalist in India over the years have caused repeated problems between Hindus and Muslims and made many question the validity of India's secular claim.

The most recent problems between the two factions centers over the Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masjid, the birth place of the Indian God Lord Rama. The agitation resurfaced in the early 1980's as a rapidly growing Hindu party the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) took the reconstruction of the

temple as its major objective. While an interim decision by the courts ruled to maintain the status quo, the VHP pushed for construction and claimed the decision was beyond the powers of the judicial system to make.

Another pro Hindu Party, the BJP party delayed VHP from beginning construction in February 1990 for 4 months to give the government time to come to a decision. It is interesting to note that the BJP was supportive of the Singh coalition and is a right wing Hindu fundamentalist party. It had grown from attaining two seats in parliament in 1984 to over 80 in 1989. This attempt to improve its image on this clearly major Hindu-Muslim issue is an indication of its desire for a bigger role in future governments in India. [Ref 65]

This will be significant in the upcoming elections and may favor the BJP which is running an independent ticket for the first time ever in Indian elections. This is also a crucial test for India's secularism and will surely be cause for future Hindu-Muslim riots in India--if an amicable solution cannot be found.

Political moves abounded around the temple-mosque issue. As indicated the BJP sought to increase its prestige by fueling Hindu desires to build the temple. The Singh government attempted to maintain its support of the Muslim community and the Hindu's by pushing for an amicable solution and not taking a definite stand on the issue. Rajiv Gandhi, who in 1989 had pushed for the construction of the temple in a failed attempt to gain the Hindu vote--actually ending up alienating both Hindus and Muslims--took a center line stance by espousing support for construction of a temple without disturbing the mosque. All of these

positions will have an effect on future elections yet an acceptable solution to the problem can only arise from an understanding between the religious leaders of both communities.

In the past Indian governments have been supportive of the Muslim issues in an attempt to justify its claim as a secular country. The possibility of Saddam's invasion of Kuwait being supported by the Muslims in the Gulf and in India was very high as evidenced by demonstrations throughout the region. Hence, India's positions on the crisis could have had exacerbated already tense Hindu-Muslim problems and have caused Muslim leaders to pull their support for the National Front Government. The government took an initial position that was most beneficial to itself and its attempt to curtail increased communal violence in the country.

### **C. HISTORICAL POSITIONS ON ARAB WORLD**

India has for years been supportive of the Arab world, linking its own struggle for independence to that of support for Arab nationalism and the right to self determination, as well, as to support for the Arab position on the Arab-Israeli dispute. [Ref 66:p.60-78] In a more localized context this support was based on appeasing its own Muslim population and countering Pakistan's influence in the Middle East.

However, the return for India's support of Arab issues--including but not limited to Egypt's nationalization of the Suez Canal, concern for Palestinian rights, and opposition to CENTO--has not been as great as

hoped. The limited pro-Indian positions during the Sino-Indian conflict in 1962 and expressed sympathy for Pakistan in the 1965 and 1971 conflicts has increased India's public animosity toward these countries. Specifically, "when the government of India, once again, openly sided with the Arabs in the Arab-Israeli conflict in 1967, the popular uproar was an indication of the public's keen awareness of how the Arab states let India down in her hour of need." [Ref 67:p.59]

The invasion of Kuwait could have easily developed into an Arab-Israeli problem. This is evidenced by U.S. pressure upon Israel to refrain from responding to attempts by Iraq to provoke Israeli military action in hopes of fracturing the coalition. Whether an Israeli response would have caused the alliance to disintegrate at that stage in the crisis is immaterial--for by then India had denounced Iraq's action and was aiding the U.S. effort by refueling aircraft. Yet, while successful diplomacy by the U.S. prevented this from occurring, there was no way of knowing the outcome in the early stages of the crisis. Hence, India's initial position was along the lines of its historical position on Arab-Israeli problems and the gradual changes in her position resulting from realization that the annexation was not being supported by the Arab governments nor was it developing into an Arab-Israeli dispute.

It is difficult to assess India's position on the basis of past actions on Arab issues. This crisis caused a major division amongst the Arab states as it was initially an inter-Arab dispute. India's support of the Arabs against the U.S. and Israel would be justification of her positions based upon a Western created alliance in the region. However--regardless of any strong arming by the U.S.--the U.S.'s presence



in Saudi Arabia was at the request of the Saudi regime. Hence, any linkage of the crisis to the Arab-Israeli issue or to support of the Arabs against western influence was null and void. Additionally, India's limited historical success with securing support of the Arab regimes vis a vis its own conflicts, further nullifies any expectation that she acted based upon past precedents in the region. However, more importantly in this conflict might otherwise have been India's long standing friendship with Iraq--a friendship she would not want to lose--but yet not one which she would allow to undermine her support for international law. Hence, it is difficult to make the claim that India's historical support for the Arab world led her to be soft on Iraq's annexation. More likely New Delhi's position was based on a fear that Indian citizens would be placed in jeopardy as a result of condemning Iraqi actions.

#### **D. INDIA VS PAKISTAN**

India's regional problems with Pakistan could have also been a player in India's non-participation in the crisis. In a private conversation with LT. Robert Clark, USN, who had interviewed an official at the Indian Embassy in Washington, D.C., he made the claim that India was not involved militarily because "she was not asked by the Saudi's." Though unproven it is quite possible that Pakistan--upon acceding to the Saudi request to send help--requested that the Saudi's not include India in the military effort against Iraq. Though the Saudi's may have liked to

include India in their defense--whether or not India would have sent a force is another question--they may have honored Pakistan's request when realizing the Western involvement would preclude the need of Indian forces. Though there is no proof for this claim--as it would likely be at the highest levels of classification in Pakistan--surely the Pakistanis, who have been on opposite sides of almost every issue with India, would not be able to see themselves fighting alongside India against anyone. In addition, Indian military involvement would have equated India and Pakistan in the eyes of the West and undermined Pakistan's attempt to regain its status with Western countries, a position which has deteriorated due to the end of the cold war.

#### **E. GLOBALISM VS REGIONALISM**

India's belief that she was a "beacon of light" for all third world countries, led to an establishment of an outward looking policy by Nehru. His attempts at mediation in various conflicts including the Suez crisis and the Korean war are evidence of his belief of India as a world peacemaker. Prime Ministers after Nehru have tended to continue this global approach to affairs due to their perception of India as a great power.

However, there has been a gradual but definite shift in emphasis, from the world focus to countries nearer to home in the implementation of Indian policies. [Ref 68] During a 1974 visit to India by the Shah of Iran, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi publicly agreed with him that

"safeguarding stability and power in the Gulf was the exclusive right of the littoral states." [Ref 16:p.177] This move was supported by many in India who had not foreseen India becoming the great power envisioned by Nehru.

Comparing the compulsions of Indian decision makers in the Nehru, Indira Gandhi, and the Rajiv Gandhi eras, we find that in the Nehru days the subcontinental power relationship were unimportant and Delhi's ties with the great powers were of central importance. Secondly, the interface between domestic problems (threats to the political system and threats to territorial integrity) and external problems were not a direct one in the India-China border clash or when Indira Gandhi decided to intervene in the Bangladesh crisis (1971). This interface surfaced in the late 1970's and the early 1980's. It is revealed in a big way in the Indian Punjab/Pakistan and Tamil/Sri Lankan situations. As a result of the interface, the approach of the Indira and Rajiv Gandhi governments to the regional foreign affairs became a manifestation of the approach from Globalism to Regionalism in foreign affairs. [Ref 68:p.708]

The Singh government was "...on the whole less ambitious in its foreign policy..." [Ref 69:p.934] and increased its efforts to improve relations in South Asia. "Greater priority has been given to India's 'immediate' regional policy as compared with its broader relations with global powers." [Ref 69:p.934] In the words of I. K. Gujral, India's foreign minister,

India's new foreign policy aims to harmonize itself with the era of peace... The long term foreign policy is to create a tension-free regional environment for India which would release funds from the Defense Budget for economic growth... India would strive to create an atmosphere of cooperation in South Asia and would work with SAARC as an equal partner. [Ref 36:p.35]

These statements illustrate a growing concern for the region and a focussing of Indian foreign relations to regional issues in an attempt to take the South Asian region into the 21st century. This changing direction of India's foreign policies is also evidenced by Gujral's statements in the UAE regarding the Gulf crisis in October 1990.

Of course this does not mean that the government "will reject force in case of grave changes at the regional level that threaten India's national interest; nor should one think that the new government is against India becoming a mighty regional power." [Ref 69:p.935] It implies that India is not apt to be as concerned about events outside South Asia--unless they directly affect her national interests and security--until a time when she can legitimately claim herself the predominant nation in South Asia. Hence, the events in the Gulf were outside of India's region of desired influence and her participation was not apt to further the new foreign policy desires of the administration.

#### **F. INDIAN MILITARY**

India's military forces have developed into one of the worlds largest. The recent expansion of India's navy has been cause for concern throughout the Indian Ocean as many question India's desires and intentions. There has been much written about India's hegemonic desires throughout the region and in this context her military participation in a crisis so near to her borders would have been expected. However, there are various factors which stood in the way of India's military

involvement--factors more pressing to the current environment in South Asia than a desire for greater influence in the Gulf.

India has only recently withdrawn its troops from Sri Lanka. Given that their employment has been a major disappointment for the Indian Army, has likely made India very wary of getting involved militarily in any conflict so soon after withdrawing from Sri Lanka. This is evidenced by the blind eye she has turned to the continued violence in Sri Lanka, and indifference partly designed to improve relations with that country. Military involvement in the Gulf would have done little to assuage the fears of her South Asian neighbors regarding India's ongoing military build up. On the contrary, claiming that she was against the use of force between nations and that her foreign policy did not support sending troops abroad would improve her standing in South Asia and might help dispel some of the anxiety in South Asia of her willingness to use force unnecessarily.

Independent India has refrained from joining military alliances. The view that these alliances prohibited a nation's independent action has been a cornerstone of Indian foreign policy since its inception. While the 1962 Sino-Indian conflict forced India to seek military aid, she has attempted to diversify her sources in order to maintain her freedom of action. The realities of this freedom are not as impressive as the idealistic desires but yet it has been a point to strive for. Thus participation in the coalition where she was not the leading member would have been viewed in New Delhi as possibly jeopardizing her independence of action, a restriction unacceptable to India.

India has never supported the U.S. military presence in the Indian Ocean. Several factors possibly influenced New Delhi's military calculation during the Gulf crisis: first, as the U.S. presence in Saudi Arabia was assured shortly after the invasion, India's military efforts would have likely been only a token; second, joining the coalition would have given approval to the U.S. build-up and even worse, as far as New Delhi was concerned, a possible permanent presence in the region. This would have violated many of India's long standing policies on the issue of foreign forces in the Indian Ocean and definitely caused a major stir in the parliament.

These issues must also be examined with regards to their timing. India's involvement initially was not likely in the circumstances--especially with a coalition government. It is likely that any Indian government would have waited to see how events were developing prior to committing forces against her long time friend. As previously discussed, she may have actually gotten involved had the VP Singh government not fallen. For although Shekhar eventually briefly participated in the effort against Iraq--based on bilateral relations with the U.S.--the involvement was curtailed by Rajiv Gandhi's political play to recapture the Muslim vote and to improve his own image at the expense of the Prime Minister.

Another factor with regard to India's military has been the lack of a National Security Council. India has traditionally viewed Pakistan and China as the only real military threats to her national security. Additionally, the vacuum at the top of her military infrastructure has prevented a close working relationship between the three services and an

identification of future threats to India's security given the rapidly changing external environment.

The obvious need for this has been foreseen as the NSC was initiated in late August 1990 to "take a comprehensive and coordinated view on all matters relating to the countries security." [Ref 70] This type of institution is paramount for a nation like India, who needs to develop definitive strategies with regards to future conflicts in the Indian Ocean. The presence of such a body and the information it provides would have better prepared the Indians for a situation like the Gulf crisis.

#### **G. INDIA AND THE SOVIET UNION**

India's foreign policy has not adjusted to the fall of the Soviets from superpower status. Indian officials may have felt that if the Soviets stepped in to force Iraq to return to the status quo then India would have prevailed by not having condemned Iraq's actions and thus not jeopardizing her long standing friendship with Iraq. However, India misjudged the Soviet's influence--for had the Soviets really had influence in Iraq, Sadaam probably could have been prevented from even going into Kuwait.

That India's view of the Soviet Union had not changed is also evidenced by the weight given to the Soviet peace proposals and India's support of them in the Indian press. A last minute trip to the Soviet Union by Gandhi to bring the crisis to a peaceful resolution was more or less snubbed in the Soviet Union as Gorbachev clearly claimed the utmost

value of maintaining relations with the U.S. over any attempt to counter the U.S. moves. [Ref 71:p.36] From the Indian perspective the Soviet move shed a great deal of light upon the future of the Soviet's role in the world.

India's unwillingness to accept the Soviets demise would have been one reason for her positions in the crisis. The problem for India is that the current politicians are too involved with maintaining power than evaluating the changing external environment. A coalition government more concerned with maintaining its role has little time to reflect upon changes in the world, when faced with daily threats to its very existence. India needs to rethink her policies with regards to a world with one superpower--whose willingness to allow regional powers to prevail regionally will be based on their support of the superpower. "It is becoming clear to the Indian leadership that in an increasingly Uni-Polar world, India will have to learn to coexist with dignity with the U.S." [Ref 71:p.35] What has to be worked out is how the world will reorganize and restructure itself in the new system.



## V. CONCLUSION

Indians have since independence spoken of the desire to participate in the world as a major power. However, the realities of a weak internal economy and rapidly changing global and regional environment have forced Indian leaders to focus greater attention on events closer to home. While successive Prime Ministers, after Nehru, have continued to face foreign policy issues from a global perspective, they have had to concentrate more and more effort on problems in South Asia.

The crisis in the Gulf caught the Indians at a time when its government had determined that its foreign policy would evolve around affairs in South Asia. As discussed earlier in the paper, while this is not a change in how governments since Indira Gandhi have focussed their policies, it is a drastic change from the Nehruvian view--a view which most people relate to India--of India's role in the world.

Given this changing focus--one which most outside of India would not have realized--India's response to the Gulf crisis should have been expected. Her involvement in the Gulf crisis would have done little to help improve relations in South Asia and the costs of a military deployment would have exacerbated an already heavy economic burden.

While India can be counted on to directly face issues which affect her national security, it is less likely that she will involve herself in conflicts outside the South Asian region. This does not mean that India

will not live up to its responsibilities in the international arena, only that her first priorities will be to South Asia.

As relations between India and the U.S. continue to improve, both countries will benefit from ensuring stability in Pakistan and of course working for stability in India as well. While reducing U.S. aid to Pakistan may prompt closer Pakistan-Chinese ties, continued U.S. pressure upon China concerning arms shipments to Pakistan and closer Indo-Sino relations might induce Pakistan to improve ties with India. Additionally, improving economic relation in South Asia may eventually lead to greater interdependence between the two countries--though Pakistan will likely never accept India's role as a regional policeman.

At the time of writing, India is in the midst of its tenth general election. After the first day of elections it appeared that the Congress Party under the leadership of Rajiv Gandhi was headed for a victory--though not with a majority in the lower house. Since the other parties are unlikely to form a coalition, Congress would probably be asked to form a government.

However, a most tragic development occurred on 21 May 1991, in the southern Indian state of Tamilnadu, with the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. While the government is hesitant to point the finger at any particular group of people for fear of escalating violence in the country, and no group has officially claimed responsibility for the killing, it is believed that the assassination can be linked to Tamil Tiger revolutionaries in Sri Lanka and Tamilnadu. Rajiv Gandhi had been instrumental in setting up the 1987 accord with Sri Lanka and in

dispatching the Indian peace keeping force to the island--as was his mother in helping to create the rebel organizations.

Mr. Gandhi's assassination has left India's politics in turmoil and India without an internationally known candidate for Prime Minister and has ended for the time being, the presence of a member of the Nehru legacy in Indian politics. While the possibility exists for his son or daughter to eventually enter politics--both are currently too young and inexperienced.

The future of Indian politics is quite uncertain. Yet this assassination is further justification for India to focus its efforts to correct its internal and regional problems before attempting to develop its greater international role. This claim is further supported by the fact that regardless of what party wins the elections, their ability to stay in power will be based on the strength with which they tackle internal and regional affairs. There can be no doubt that India will eventually emerge as a major world actor. The ability to peacefully change governments and survive this most recent tragedy attests to the strength of the Indian democracy and the resilience of the Indian people.

There seems to be an evolving U.S. tilt towards India. This is enhanced by cooling U.S.-Pakistan ties and U.S. pressure upon China to reduce military aid to Pakistan. However, despite India's apparent changing foreign policy which calls for warmer relations with its South Asian neighbors, one must not too readily forget New Delhi's willingness to use both military and economic superiority as a weapon to coerce regional countries to see things from an Indian perspective.

Improved relations between India and the U.S. are a must for India. Due to the collapse of the Soviets, India is now in need of U.S. assistance to continue the development of her economic and military infrastructure. Additionally, India may require the assistance of the U.S. in deterring Pakistan's nuclear ambitions and in preventing a conflict on the subcontinent where she may find herself combating both China and Pakistan.

Given these factors, It is India who must learn to live within what appears to be a Unipolar world. The U.S. must keep from enhancing India's hegemonic capabilities at the expense of being considered a partner to India's actions. The realities of a post cold war world will give the U.S. greater freedom to work closely with India to ensure its eventual emergence as a global power are founded on principles which are acceptable to the international community, and not merely upon an ability to project influence as an act of coercion.

## APPENDIX

### Indian Naval Growth Since Independence

1947-48	1965-66	1971-72
Total Strength: 11,000	Total Strength: 16,000	Total Strength: 40,000
4 sloops	1 carrier	1 carrier
2 frigates	2 cruisers	4 submarines
1 corvette	3 destroyers	2 cruisers
12 flt minesweepers	5 ASW frigates	3 destroyers
4 trollers	3 AAW frigates	9 destroyer escorts
4 mtr minesweepers	6 escort ships	1 gen purpose frigates
4 mtr launches	6 minesweepers	5 ASW frigates
1 survey ship	13 lt csl vessels	3 AAW frigates
	2 amphibious vessels	10 patrol boats
	5 survey/trg vessels	4 csl minesweepers
		4 inshr minesweepers
		3 landing ship/craft
		9 seaward def boats
	1986-87	1990-91
	Total Strength: 47,000	Total Strength: 52,000
	2 carriers	2 carriers
	10 submarines	19 submarines
	4 destroyers	5 destroyers
	23 frigates	20 frigates
	4 corvettes	10 corvettes
	14 missile craft	12 missile craft
	9 large patrol craft	18 support and misc
	18 mine countermeasure	20 mine countermeasure
	12 amphibious vessels	10 amphibious vessels

1. Information from 1947 to 1987 cited from Tellis, A. J., "India's Naval Expansion: Structure, Dimensions and Context, [see REF 6].  
1990-91 information drawn from *The Military Balance* (London: IISS) data for 1990-91.

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